



An Investigation of Civilians' Preparedness to Compete with Individuals with Military Experience for Army Board Select Acquisition Positions

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May 1, 2017



Submitted to Lawrence Technological University College
of Management in partial fulfillment of the degree of
Master of Global Leadership and Management



Submitted to Defense Acquisition University in partial
fulfillment of the requirement of the Senior Service
College Fellowship

Approval Page

Title: An Investigation of Civilians' Preparedness to Compete with Individuals with Military Experience for Army Board Select Acquisition Positions

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Date of Paper: Spring 2017

IRB Approval: Matthew L. Cole, Ph.D.

Date: February 10, 2017

OPSEC Approval: Joseph McMullen

Date: June 14, 2017

Public Affairs Approval: Raymond Bingham

Date: June 14, 2017

Submission Date to DAU Library

Date: June 16, 2017

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Abstract

This research examined the extent to which the Army has prepared its civilians to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions and to what extent there are bias in the board select acquisition process.

The research employed a mixed research methodology – quantitative with descriptive statistical analysis and qualitative with a thematic analysis approach using interviews to collect the data. The interviews included demographic and open-ended, qualitative questions. The questions were electronically distributed, via email, in advance of the interviews. The interview population was nine key senior Army leaders (military members and civilians) that have led or served on Army acquisition selection boards, have competed successfully using the Army acquisition board selection process, or own or support the Army acquisition board selection process.

The findings from the study were that to a great extent the Army has provided civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions. And while there may not be parity in the board select acquisition process, there is little evidence of bias.

The final recommendation was that the United States Army Acquisition Support Center's Road Shows be reinstated as a way to effectively communicate career information to the workforce. This will help leaders become more informed on career information to mentor employees on their careers, leading them on the path to success.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Background

Army acquisition programs are led by leaders that have been selected by a board of senior leaders. Previously only military members were eligible to compete for Army board select acquisition positions; however, due to the drawdown of the military, civilians are now eligible and encouraged to compete for these positions.

Problem Statement

The push for civilians to compete for Army board select acquisition positions has increased over time, but civilians without military experience have not competed well with individuals with military experience for these positions (Fahey, 2016).

In order to clearly understand the complexity of this problem, it is important to identify that there are four categories of individuals that are involved in this problem space: military members; civilians; civilians that have prior military experience; and civilians that currently serve in the military – Reserves and National Guard. It is also important to identify that there are four types of Army board select acquisition positions: board select Product Director/GS-14; board select Project Director/GS-15; Command Select List Product Manager LTC/GS-14; and Command Select List Project Manager COL/GS-15.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study, is to determine the extent to which the Army has prepared its civilians to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions and to what extent there are biases in the board select acquisition process.

Research Questions

This research paper addresses two questions related to civilians' preparedness to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions:

1. To what extent does the Army provide civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions?
2. To what extent are there biases in the board select acquisition process?

Significance of this Research

This research is important, because if the Army wants civilians to be competitive with individuals with military experience, for board select acquisition positions, but civilians are not prepared to compete; changes can be made to improve civilians' competitiveness for these positions.

Overview of the Research Methodology

The researcher employed a mixed research methodology – quantitative and qualitative, using interviews to collect the data. The interviews included demographic and open-ended, qualitative questions. Prior to the collection of the data, the researcher obtained approval to conduct this research using human participants, from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Lawrence Technological University (LTU). The IRB approval letter is attached as Appendix A. The questions were electronically distributed, via email, in advance of the interviews. The population of those interviewed, were nine key senior Army leaders (military members and civilians) that have led or served on Army acquisition selection boards, have competed successfully using the Army acquisition board selection process, or are owners/supporters of the Army acquisition board selection process. Those interviewed were asked questions regarding to what extent the Army provides civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions,

and about biases in the board select acquisition process. In addition, the interviews also collected demographic data regarding current position, amount of experience working for the Army as a civilian and/or military member, experience and success applying for a board select acquisition position, and experience serving on an acquisition selection board. The demographic data was used to verify that the interviewees were in the targeted population. The informed consent and interview instrument are shown in Appendix B. This thesis was approved for public release by the Project Management Office Expeditionary Energy and Sustainment Systems on June 14, 2017; the OPSEC Review Certification (AR-530-1, Operations Security) form number is: #7114-2 (Appendix C).

Analytical Techniques

The analysis for the quantitative data consisted of descriptive statistical analysis. The open-ended, qualitative questions in the interview were evaluated and thematically categorized by the researcher.

Limitations of the Study

There were two primary limitations with this study:

1. The researcher was not able to differentiate between the four categories of individuals: military members; civilians; civilians with prior military experience; and civilians with current military experience in the Army National Guard and Army Reserves. Not being able to differentiate between the four categories of individual was a limiting factor, but did not reduce the benefit of the results.
2. The researcher was not able to fully incorporate the statistics on civilian versus military selectees for FYs 16-18 provided by the Acquisition

Management Branch, U. S. Army Human Resources Command; however, these statistics fully support the low civilian success rate for both CSL categories, for these Army board acquisition positions: for LTC/GS-14, 7% were civilian selectees; and for Colonel/GS-15, 4% were civilian selectees. Not being able to fully incorporate the statistics on civilian versus military selectees for FYs 16-18 was a limiting factor, but it did not reduce the benefit of the results (Lewis, 2017).

Thesis Organization

Chapter 2 will provide an in-depth literature review, of civilians' preparedness to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions. The research methodology will be described in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will present data analysis and results. And Chapter 5 will address conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review presents the results of published research and information on civilians' preparedness to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions. The specific topics researched include:

- A glimpse at the United States Army Acquisition Support Center, United States Army Director for Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office's position on civilians' preparedness for competing with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions, as well as the need for further study on this topic
- The Army Acquisition Career Development Model
- Specific acquisition career field guidance for the civilian workforce
- Professional development and career management for Army acquisition officers
- The requirements for board selection packages for military members and civilians
- The Command Select List program management selection board process
- Who gets chosen for the Army board select acquisition positions – civilians or those with military experience?

DACM Office Perspective

In July 2016, the researcher discussed her proposed research paper topic – An investigation of civilians' preparedness to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board acquisition positions – with one of her Senior Service College Fellowship mentors, a retired member of the Army's Senior Executive Service. The researcher's mentor was not sure that this topic that had been chosen needed any additional research; so he contacted a former

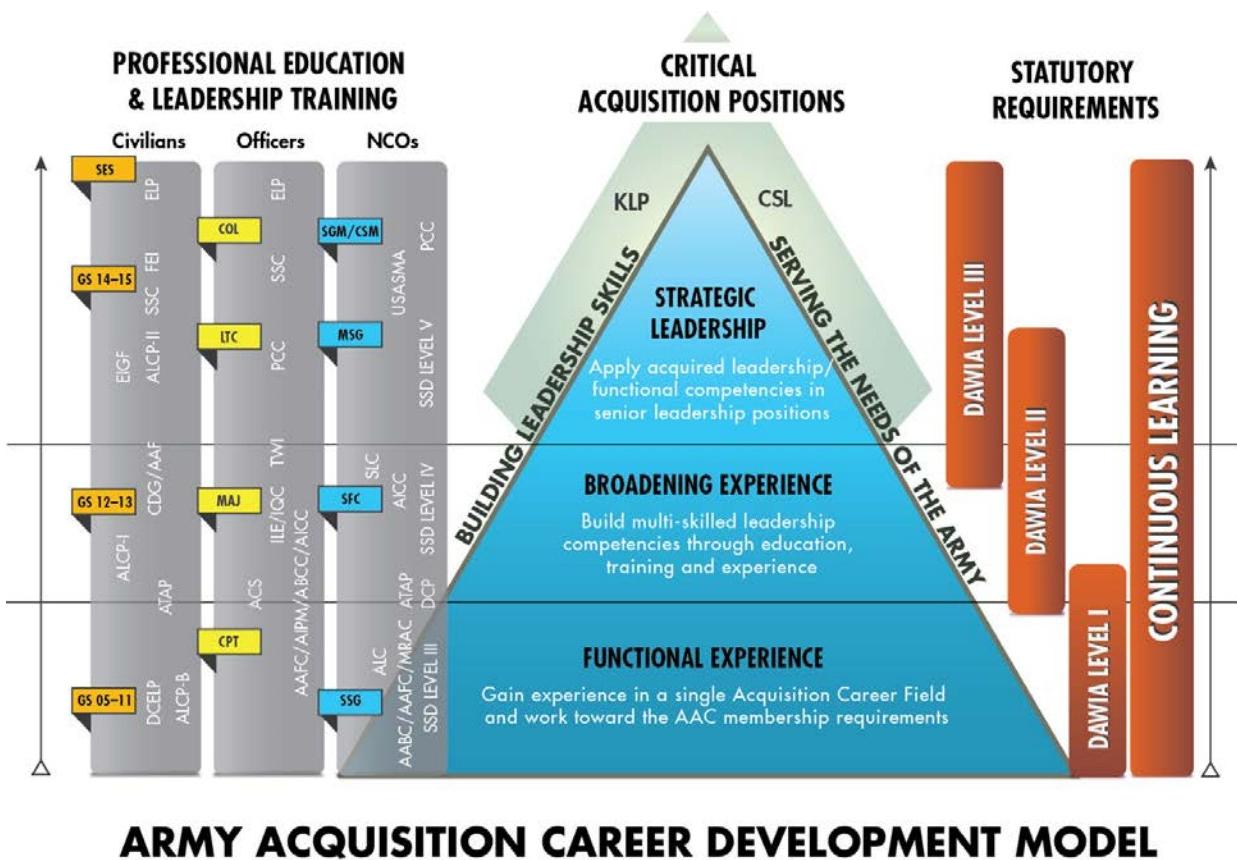
military member, who works for the United States Army Acquisition Support Center, United States Army Director for Acquisition Career Management, as Chief of Workforce Management, and discussed it with him to get his perspective. "...For the most part he agreed with me that they have studied this many times and continue to make changes. But that said he thought you studying this again as your thesis could be valuable. We talked about the idea of looking at where we have been, what we have done, and as a result of your analysis what is left to be done to continue to develop senior civilian leaders and civilians who want to and can compete competitively with the military on the Command Select List (CSL) boards. They have published a PM model recently, which shows how to prepare to be a PM, they have survey results from many previous surveys, and obviously all the guidance. He said they would be able to help and have a tremendous amount of data and analysis. They have studied why civilians do not compete, and why they not do well when they do compete. He also knows communication could be better to the workforce but not sure exactly how to improve the communication so that people pay attention and senior leaders do their job" (Fahey, 2016).

Army Acquisition Career Development Model

The Army provides civilians and military members the big picture roadmap that could potentially lead to a board select acquisition position. It should be noted that the path for a civilian will be different from that of their military counterpart (officer), especially in the area of professional education and leadership training.

"The Army acquisition workforce is composed of civilian and military professionals who support the various phases of the acquisition life cycle. The Army Acquisition Career Development Model, shown below, provides guidance to civilian and military Army acquisition workforce personnel regarding their acquisition careers. The model lays out the statutory

certification training for all workforce members; the professional education and leadership training specific to acquisition civilians, military and non-commissioned officers; and the functional, broadening, and strategic experience suggested to attain the pinnacle of an acquisition career. All this information is tied to where an acquisition workforce member is in their career based on grade/rank; hence, providing a guide to ensure one is on track toward career success.



Specific Acquisition Career Field Guidance for the Civilian Workforce

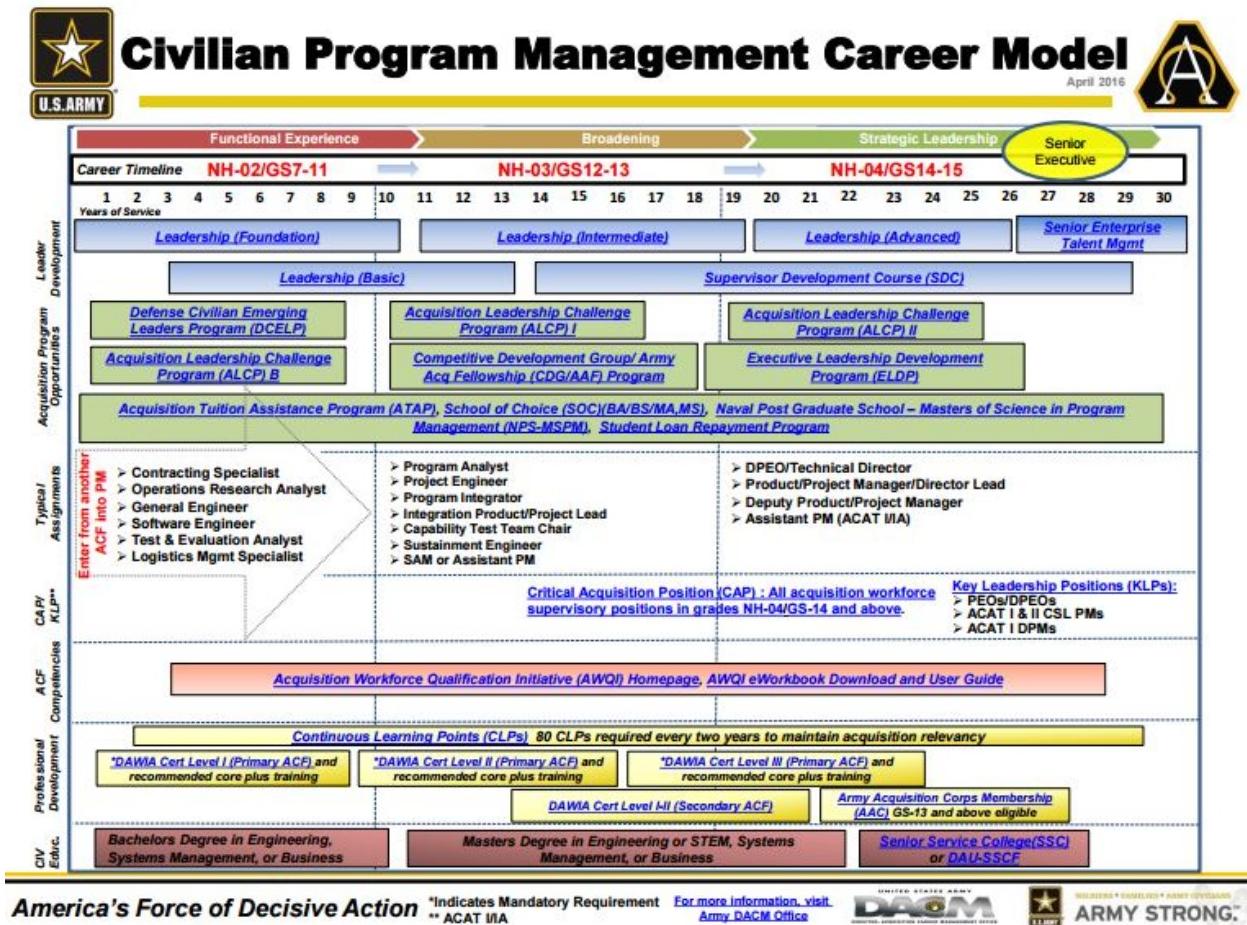
The Army acquisition population is diverse and crosses 13 Acquisition Career Fields (ACFs). The Army DACM Office has developed Career Models for each ACF which are intended as notional guides for professional growth and a well-rounded ACF experience. Not every opportunity presented on the models is required, nor suited for everyone. Within the models, courses/programs are hyperlinks which connect to dedicated website pages for each course/program where additional information may be found. Acquisition workforce employees, along with their supervisors, should use these models as tools for developing a plan to advance throughout one's acquisition career. Additional information on the ACFs may be found in the DAU icatalog.

Acquisition Workforce Qualification Initiative (AWQI)

One of the tools you'll find on each career model is a link to the AWQI e-workbook. AWQI is a key element of Better Buying Power to "improve the professionalism of the Total Acquisition Workforce". It's a DOD-wide employee development tool used to identify gaps in experience by outlining a set of standards by career field to ensure acquisition professionals have the skills required to be successful and grow throughout their career. The tool can be used to identify individual strengths and weaknesses, and offers solutions to fill those gaps. Supervisors and employees are encouraged to use the AWQI e-workbook to develop individual career development plans that address the individual needs of every member of the Army Acquisition Workforce. Additionally, AWQI provides a common set of standards for organizations that can use this information to mitigate acquisition skill gaps by leveraging developmental opportunities or targeting strategic hiring..." (Career Planning Steps, 2017).

Program Management Career Model

One of ACF's thirteen career models is the Program Management Career Model:



(Career Planning Steps, 2017)

By following the above Program Management Career Model, the following steps to planning one's career in Program Management, and the following post certification requirements/opportunities, a civilian has the detailed roadmap to obtain the skills necessary to be competitive for a Program Management position:

Step One – Prepare an Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB)

The ACRB is an automated, authenticated record of your education, training, and acquisition assignment history; it was created to mirror the military Officer Record Brief (ORB). Many of the fields in the ACRB are populated automatically when you are assigned to your acquisition position. It is your official acquisition record and it is your responsibility to update and maintain it accurately. The ACRB can be accessed from CAPPMIS. Select CAPPMIS on the navigation bar, and then select the ACRB tab. CAPPMIS is an integrated set of tools to help serve and manage your acquisition career. It provides access to the Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB), Individual Development Plan (IDP) and the ATRRS Internet Training Application System (AITAS). All three are important to you as an acquisition workforce member.

Step Two – Review Certification Requirements

The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) requires that employees meet the acquisition certification requirements (education, training and experience) associated with the acquisition position they encumber within 24 months after assignment. Certification levels are generally based on the grade (or pay band equivalent) of the position as follows: Level I – GS-05 through GS-08; Level II – GS-09 through GS-12; Level III – GS-13 and above. Certification requirements can be found in the DAU icatalog (click on the “Certification & Core + Development Guides” button). Your first priority is to become certified in the ACF and level required by your current acquisition position. The ACF and level required for your acquisition position are shown on your ACRB under Section I (Current Position Data).

Step Three – Prepare an Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Army acquisition workforce members are required to maintain a five-year IDP. Based on the assignment to your initial acquisition position, your IDP is automatically populated with the courses required for your DAWIA certification. Beyond the certification requirements, preparation of the IDP is a joint venture between you and your supervisor. The IDP permits you and your supervisor to identify and track acquisition career objectives in the areas of education, training and experiential opportunities. Objectives should reflect overall broad career goals and specific developmental activities intended to accomplish them. The developmental objectives should be attainable in a reasonable time frame and do not have to be purely acquisition related. They can include items such as functional training, leadership, education, professional activities, and assignment experience that can lead toward the overall achievement of broad career goals. The IDP should be reviewed in conjunction with the normal appraisal cycles (initial review, mid-point review, and final rating period). The IDP can be accessed from CAPPMIS. Select CAPPMIS on the navigation bar, and then select the IDP tab. Note for Total Employee Development (TED) users: Employee course requests, IDP goals and IDP objectives are entered first into TED. TED IDP entries will then flow immediately into CAPPMIS.

Step Four – Submit your IDP for Approval

Once you have annotated all of your acquisition career goals and have entered any education, training or experience that is required to achieve certification, you may submit your IDP to your supervisor for approval. This approval process is done electronically; therefore, you must ensure your current supervisor's name and correct email address are

listed in your IDP. If your current supervisor is not listed in your IDP, please advise your supervisor to log on to the IDP site and add you to his/her employee listing (Supervisor: log in at CAPPMIS, select CAPPMIS on the navigation bar, then select the IDP tab, click on “Supervisor” and then on the “Add Employee(s)” button). Your supervisor will receive a system-generated email notification when you submit your IDP for review and approval. Once your supervisor has approved or denied your request, you will receive email notification. Note for TED users: TED class request, supervisor approvals and other IDP changes will post to the CAPPMIS IDP automatically.

Step Five – Apply for Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Training

After your IDP is approved by your supervisor, you may apply for DAU courses at ATRRS. The ATRRS Internet Training Application System (AITAS) is the web based application system that provides dates, locations, and availability for all DAU training. AITAS works in conjunction with the IDP and allows Army acquisition workforce members to submit their training applications electronically for both distance learning and resident courses. It is important to remember that the IDP is for planning purposes only; it is not the vehicle to register for DAU training. However, you cannot register for any DAU training unless the course is identified on your IDP and the supervisor has approved it. Note to TED users: Notify your TED administrator when you have completed a DAU class, so that TED records can be updated.

Step Six – Apply for Certification

DAWIA certification is not automatically granted. After completion of the appropriate training, education and experience required by your acquisition position, you must apply for certification through the automated Certification Management System

(CMS). The CMS can be accessed from CAPPMIS. Select CAPPMIS on the navigation bar, and then select the CMS tab. After the certifying official reviews your application, you will be notified by email of the approval or denial decision. If approved, the certification will be added to Section X of your ACRB. If your application is denied, a justification will be provided with further instructions, if applicable. Becoming certified in your position is mandatory. Once you are placed into your acquisition position, you have a 24-month grace period to earn your certification. Failure to meet the statutory acquisition career field certification within the grace period may result in various personnel actions such as reassignment, reduction in grade or pay band, loss of consideration for promotion, or separation from Federal service (see Director, Army Acquisition Career Management Memorandum #8). Your command can request a waiver, using DD Form 2905, to give you extra time if mandatory classes are filled or you cannot make certain training schedules required for certification. Please see the Acquisition Workforce Strategy Map for a detailed DAWIA certification roadmap. There are additional steps and options once you are certified.

Continuous Learning Points (CLPs)

The Department of Defense (DOD) policy on continuous learning requires each acquisition workforce member earn 40 CLPs every year as a goal and 80 CLPs being mandatory within two years. The 2-year cycle begins 1 October of the even year and runs through 30 September of the following even year. The Department of Defense (DOD) policy on continuous learning ensures that workforce members remain current and relevant throughout their acquisition careers. The automated IDP is the document used to annotate activities that count toward continuous learning and can be found at

CAPPMIS. For DAU courses (including Continuous Learning Modules), your CLPs will be automatically entered into your ACRB/IDP via the training update process using the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS). It may take up to two weeks after completion of the course before the data is transferred to the ACRB/IDP. For all other coursework, you must enter the course in your IDP, annotate completion, and request corresponding CLPs be awarded by your supervisor. Note to TED users: TED users do not need to manually add course completions to CAPPMIS. The CLPs for all TED class completions will automatically post to CAPPMIS when the record is moved to “history”. In some cases, completion of a TED course survey is required before the record will move to “history”. Non-training events can be input directly into TED history, and will post to CAPPMIS after supervisor approval of the CLPs.

Developmental Opportunities

Developmental opportunities exist at every grade and at all command/organizational levels. You should consider numerous experiences at every level to develop both breadth and depth within your acquisition career level. Speak to your supervisor/mentor about developmental opportunities.

ACF Specific Professional Certifications

ACF specific professional certifications are an additional level of professional recognition regarding a specific body of knowledge, i.e., Business Finance Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM) certification, DoD Financial Managers certification program, Program Manager Professional (PMP), etc.

Career-Broadening Activities

The mark of your proficiency in your acquisition career field is attainment of the level of certification required of your position. Even if your position requires that you achieve Level II certification, you are encouraged to work toward attaining Level III certification in your acquisition career field. The following information is provided to assist you with your career development plan.

Core Plus – The Core Plus program provides a “roadmap” for acquisition workforce members to attain functional competencies within their ACF beyond the minimum certification standards required for their position. The Core Plus Development Guides can be found in the DAU icatalog (select the “Certification & Core + Development Guides” button). The Core Plus Development Guide is intended to assist employees and their supervisors in preparing an IDP by identifying training, education, and experience beyond certification requirements that may be beneficial to career development or performance in a particular type of assignment. Core Plus activities may also be applied toward the CLP requirement.

Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) – All Army acquisition workforce employees, regardless of grade level, should be aware of the AAC eligibility requirements. Special attention should be given to the education requirements of the AAC. Employees who do not meet the degree or business hour requirements should place special emphasis on completing those requirements. AAC requirements can be found in the DoDI 5000.66, Enclosure 7. GS-13 (or broadband equivalent) employees who meet AAC requirements should apply using the automated

application. Select CAPP MIS on the navigation bar, and then select the AAC MS tab.

[Acquisition Education, Training and Experience \(AET\)](#) – The AET Catalog outlines those USAASC/Army DACM Office funded opportunities that will assist acquisition workforce members in their career progression. It provides basic information on available opportunities and the process by which to apply. The AET Catalog is divided into three major categories: educational/academic opportunities, functional/technical and leadership training, and experiential and developmental opportunities. Examples of AET programs include the Competitive Development Group/Army Acquisition Fellowship (CDG/AAF) Program, Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program, Naval Postgraduate School Programs, and Senior Service College Fellowship Programs” (Career Planning Steps, 2017).

Professional Development and Career Management for Army Acquisition Officers

Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, dated 3 December 2014, outlines the professional development and career management for Army Acquisition Officers:

“41-4. Officer development

a. There are three domains of leader development: Institutional training and education, assignments, and self-development. These domains define and engage a continuous cycle of education, training, selection, experience, assessment, feedback, reinforcement, and evaluation which shapes officer development throughout career progression. Officers should balance assignments in order to gain a breadth and depth of operational and staff experience across a variety of organizations and environments. The 21st century requires flexible and adaptable officers with a broad experience base gained by executing critical functions in different organizational cultures and practices.

(1) *Active Component career and assignments management.* AA FA 51 officers are centrally managed by the Acquisition Management Branch within the Force Sustainment Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, HRC. The Acquisition Management Branch provides career development through the management of schooling and assignment opportunities for FA 51 officers.

(2) *U.S. Army Reserve career and assignments management.* USAR FA 51 officers are centrally managed by the Acquisition Management Branch at HRC. The HRC Acquisition

Management Branch manages FA 51 assignments for USAR officers regardless of basic branch affiliation.

(3) *Army National Guard career and assignments management.* ARNG FA 51 officers are managed by State AGs in coordination with the ARNG Human Capital Management Office and the ARNG Acquisition Career Management Office.

b. *Officer development model.* The foundation of FA 51 officer professional development is the experience, education and training required to obtain DAWIA certification. All acquisition officers can expect to have ample opportunities to serve in diverse assignments and receive the training required to attain DAWIA Certification. Professional military schooling, acquisition unique training and experience as well as a strong manner of performance help officers to be competitive for subsequent positions with increasing responsibilities and challenges.

(1) *Certification.* Officers are required to obtain a professional certification in accordance with the DAWIA, Public Law 101–510, 10 USC Chapter 87 and other DOD directives and instructions. Certification levels are assigned to each acquisition position: Level I (captain/major); Level II (major); Level III (lieutenant colonel/colonel). The different levels of certification build upon acquisition skills and competencies gained at each level which include education, training (institutional) and experience against established criteria. Certification levels are reflected on the officer's official DA Form 4037. Information on current certification requirements can be located in the DAU catalog at <http://icatalog.dau.mil>.

(2) *Professional/self-development requirements.* The tool used to track and maintain self-development requirements is an Individual Development Plan (IDP). An IDP is a five-year living document between an officer and his/her rater that outlines specific objectives and training that an officer will accomplish during the course of an assignment. Officers at all ranks are required to complete 80 Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) every 2 years in order to maintain their proficiency and professional development. IDP, CLP, and training certification tools can be accessed at <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp>. All AC and RC (AGR) FA 51 officers may apply for the opportunity to attend a fully funded advanced civil schooling or Training with Industry program after their first acquisition assignment. Selection to advanced civilian schooling or Training with Industry is contingent upon the needs of the Army, the officer's promotion potential, their potential for academic success, and their career timeline. Eligible officers pursuing off-duty undergraduate or graduate civilian education courses may apply for tuition assistance under the provisions of AR 621–5. Acquisition officers should also dedicate time to professional reading and maintain currency with industry trends and new technologies.

(3) *Re-greening.* “Re-greening” provides an opportunity for Army Acquisition Corps officers to refresh their exposure to current tactics, techniques, procedures, and weapons systems in operationally current and relevant environments. After promotion to Major and before selection to Colonel, each acquisition officer is expected to experience a “re-greening” opportunity that is operationally intensive and relatively limited in duration. They will serve primarily in acquisition billets. The Director of Acquisition Career Management is the approving authority to assign an acquisition officer to a non-acquisition billet for any re-greening opportunity; the Director of Acquisition Career Management directly manages and approves non-acquisition assignments on a case-by-case basis. These requirements may be accomplished using several options:

- (a) Temporary assignment to a Worldwide Individual Augmentation System (WIAS) billet (6 to 12 months in duration).
- (b) Temporary assignment as a Science and Technology Advisor to deployed headquarters (4 to 12 months in duration).
- (c) Temporary assignment to a Forward Operational Assessment team that supports a deployed headquarters or other contingency missions (4 to 12 months in duration).
- (d) TDY deployment to training centers, the Network Integration Evaluation (NIE), or combat areas of responsibility as an embedded observer or as additional manpower for the deploying battalion, brigade, or division (2 months or longer).
- (e) Contracting assignments that support deployments, exercises, and other contingencies are considered to be inherently re-greening.
- (f) Operational testing and certain combat development assignments.
- (g) Other experiences as coordinated with the first general officer in the officer's chain of command, or HRC.

(4) *Acquisition Corps Membership.* At the time of accession, commissioned officers in the Army Acquisition Corps are designated as FA 51 officers and become acquisition workforce members. Designation as an Acquisition Corps member occurs when specific training, education and experience milestones are met. Acquisition Corps membership shall be made in accordance with criteria and procedures established by the Secretary of Defense. Only officers who meet all of the following requirements may be considered for Acquisition Corps membership:

- (a) Have received a baccalaureate degree at an accredited educational institution authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees, with at least 24 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) of study from an accredited institution of higher education from among the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and organization and management or equivalent training; or, at least 24 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) from an accredited institution of higher education in AOC A or AOC C and 12 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) from such an institution from among the disciplines listed above.

- (b) The officer must be in the grade of major or above and have at least 4 years of experience in an acquisition position in DOD or in a comparable position in industry or government.

- (c) The officer must be a minimum of DAWIA Level II certified in at least one ACF.

(5) Critical acquisition positions, key leadership positions (KLPs), and CSL: Per 10 USC Chapter 87, Section 1733, a critical acquisition position may only be filled by an Acquisition Corps member.

- (a) *Critical acquisition positions.* The Army acquisition executive designates critical acquisition positions based on the criticality of the position to the acquisition program, effort, or function supported. All military acquisition positions in the grade of lieutenant colonel and higher are designated as critical acquisition positions unless waived by the appropriate authority. The statutory tenure for all critical acquisition positions is 3 years.

- (b) *Key leadership positions.* The Army acquisition executive and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Technology and Logistics identify, designate and account for KLPs. KLPs are a subset of critical acquisition positions with a significant level of responsibility and authority and are essential to the success of a program or effort.

Organizations will establish guidance to ensure personnel occupying KLPs either meet DAWIA education, training and experience standards or obtain an approved waiver.

(c) *Centralized selection list.* A HQDA board centrally selects a limited number of high performing officers for command and key billets. The CSL system identifies the most critical organizations that require centrally selected officers to meet their leadership and management needs. This process selects the best-qualified officers, with the right skill and experiences, to lead Army professionals, prepare for the full spectrum of military operations, and manage the Army's resources. The Army's Centralized Command/Key Billet Selection System designates all the Army's CSL positions into one of two categories: CSL Command or CSL Key Billet. All Army Acquisition Corps CSL positions are designated as CSL Key Billet who represent the Army Acquisition Corps' top leaders. The types of Army Acquisition Corps CSL Key Billets are project manager, contracting support brigade commander, product manager, contracting battalion commander, and acquisition director (both at the colonel and lieutenant colonel level).

(6) *Joint qualification.* The Joint Qualification System acknowledges both designated joint billets as well as experience-based joint duty assignments in contributing to the development of joint qualified officers. These assignments with the necessary JPME culminate with an officer being identified as a fully Joint Qualified Officer and the receipt of the 3L SI. Additional information can be found in DODI 1300.19.

(7) *Mentorship.* Mentorship is a powerful tool that can help build competence, leadership skills, self-awareness, and morale. FA 51 officers are strongly encouraged to pursue mentorship opportunities at all levels. Senior acquisition officers should actively serve as mentors to junior acquisition officers, in order to offer their perspective on what it takes to succeed in the Army Acquisition Corps and pass on their knowledge and experience. It will be critical for key leaders to support mentoring efforts publicly. Military leaders must take care to avoid micromanaging mentors and requiring participation in formal mentoring programs. When developing formal mentoring programs, planners should consider vetting mentors and deliberately select those with demonstrated efficacy in other interpersonal relationships. Some of these key interpersonal skills are communication ability, empathy, listening, and emotional intelligence. These skills will help to ensure greater success in the mentor role. Supervising and mentoring junior leaders is an integral component of an effective professional development program, while on-the-job experience will fulfill some of the requisites for acquiring tactical and technical proficiency. Leaders must establish a sound process for subordinate development that furnish the guidelines and establish the parameters for arming and infusing our subordinates with honed leadership capabilities. Using this knowledge, junior officers as mentees can advance their confidence, skills, and capabilities; maximize their potential; and grow as leaders.

c. *Captain/major development.* En route to their first acquisition assignment, all acquisition officers are required to attend the Acquisition Basic Qualification Course. The composition of Acquisition Basic Qualification Course training depends on whether their first assignment is in Program Management (AOC A) or Contracting (AOC C).

(1) FA 51A officers will attend the Army Acquisition Foundation Course, followed by the Army Acquisition Intermediate Program Management Course (AIPM). The completion of these two courses ensures that FA 51A officers will meet the training requirements needed for Level II certification in Program Management before they report to their first acquisition assignment.

(2) FA 51C officers will similarly attend the Army Acquisition Foundation Course, but they will follow this course with the Army Basic Contracting Course. This sequence allows them to attain the necessary training requirements for Level I certification in Contracting before they report to their first contracting assignment. The Army Acquisition Foundation Course, AIPM, and Army Basic Contracting Course are taught at the U.S. Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE) in Huntsville, AL, and represent the initial PME courses for FA 51 officers. USAR and ARNG officers may attend these courses (in lieu of DAU courses) on a space available basis and in coordination with their career manager.

(3) Upon graduation from the Acquisition Basic Qualification Course, newly trained captains and majors will be assigned to a position which is designed to develop their functional understanding in either program management or contracting. Most assignments for AA, USAR, and ARNG FA 51 officers will be between 24–48 months. Assignments OCONUS locations may require shorter tour lengths. The goal is to expose officers to multiple acquisition experiences in order to grow agile and adaptive leaders who are prepared to lead highly complex, multifunctional organizations and provide acquisition expertise throughout the full range of military operations. FA 51C officers will return to the AACoE either during or after their first contracting assignment to complete the Army Acquisition Intermediate Contracting Course. Upon completion of the Army Acquisition Intermediate Contracting Course, they will have the training requirements needed to attain Level II certification in contracting.

(4) For increased competitiveness for promotion to lieutenant colonel, officers should have achieved a minimum MEL 4. For FA 51 officers, MEL 4 is awarded after successful completion of the common core ILE and FA 51 Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC). All officers in YDCS, G–1994 and subsequent should complete the ILE and the follow-on FA 51 IQC no later than their 15th year of Active Federal commissioned service. Officers should meet the statutory requirements prior to selection to lieutenant colonel. More information can be found at: <http://asc.army.mil>. An additional Army Acquisition Corps goal is for FA 51 officers to obtain a master's degree in an acquisition related discipline. Officers must complete or have completed the minimum number of business hours required for Acquisition Corps membership and any specific requirement for specific ACF certification prior to selection to lieutenant colonel.

(5) Careful planning and attention to an individual's qualifications and expertise are essential in facilitating an officer's growth to a high-level of technical proficiency. Multiple developmental and KD assignments in a single AOC best achieve this goal and facilitate Level III certification prior to promotion to lieutenant colonel. In some cases, an officer may have the opportunity to seek broadening assignments upon achieving Level III certification.

(6) Developmental assignments expose an acquisition officer to a full spectrum of experiences within their primary AOC which allows them to develop acquisition skills and become technically proficient. Examples of these assignments, identified below in alphabetical order, include but are not limited to:

- (a) Combat developer.
- (b) Contracting team member.
- (c) Systems manager.
- (d) Test and evaluation officer.

(7) A KD assignment is one that is deemed fundamental to the development of an officer's core branch or FA competencies or deemed critical by the senior Army leadership to provide experience across the Army's strategic mission. AA captains and majors should have a goal to serve at least 24 months in one or a combination of KD assignments. Examples of these assignments, identified below in alphabetical order, include but are not limited to:

- (a) Administrative Contracting Officer.
- (b) Assistant Product Manager.
- (c) Contracting Team Leader.
- (d) Program Integrator.

(8) Broadening assignments provide officers the opportunity to expand their expertise in their primary AOC or to experience a secondary ACF. FA 51 officers may serve in a variety of broadening assignments at OSD, DA Staff, Joint Commands, Combatant Commands, International assignments, National Laboratories, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, and NASA. These positions provide exposure to experiences inside and outside of Army organizations, characterized by different organizational cultures and practices. All AC and RC (AGR) FA 51 officers may apply for the opportunity to attend a fully funded advanced civil schooling, Naval Postgraduate School, or Training with Industry Program. Selection to advanced civilian schooling or Training with Industry is contingent upon the needs of the Army, the officer's promotion potential, their potential for academic success, and their career timeline. Examples of broadening assignments, identified below in alphabetical order, include but are not limited to:

- (a) ASA(ALT) or DA staff officer.
- (b) Joint/OSD staff officer.
- (c) Service with another Government agency

d. Lieutenant colonel development. The career development goal for a lieutenant colonel is to leverage acquired acquisition skills in CSL or critical acquisition position. Selection to a CSL position represents the pinnacle of service at the lieutenant colonel level and serves as an indicator of potential for promotion and selection to colonel and SSC. Officers who do not serve in a CSL position will continue to serve an essential role in the success of the Acquisition Corps by providing leadership in critical acquisition position billets. All lieutenant colonels should progressively seek challenging CSL and non-CSL positions to include: product manager, contracting commander, product director, Joint and HQDA Staff positions, acquisition director, and other key positions. All lieutenant colonel positions are considered critical acquisition positions and officers assigned to such positions must be Acquisition Corps members and DAWIA Level III certified, upon selection to lieutenant colonel officers will have 24 months to meet these statutory requirements. In order to compete for CSL Key Billet selection, an officer must be an Acquisition Corps member and have achieved a minimum of Level III certification in either program management or contracting ACFs. Lieutenant colonels selected for CSL Key Billet must complete a PCC and complete CSL statutory requirements. FA 51 officers compete for SSC (MEL 1) along with other branches/FAs. SSC is the highest level military educational program available to prepare officers for the positions of greatest responsibility in the DOD. All AC and RC (AGR) FA 51 officers may apply for the opportunity to participate in the Training with Industry program. Selection to Training with Industry is contingent upon the needs of the Army, the officers' promotion potential, their potential

for academic success, and their career timeline. Critical acquisition position assignments examples are identified below in alphabetical order, include but are not limited to:

- (1) Acquisition director.
- (2) Contracting battalion commander.
- (3) DASC director.
- (4) Deputy project director.
- (5) Joint/OSD staff officer.
- (6) Military science advisor.
- (7) Product manager.
- (8) Test and evaluation officer.

e. *Colonel development.* The career development goal for a colonel is to serve in a FA 51 CSL Key Billet as project manager, contracting support brigade commander, or acquisition director. Colonels successfully completing a CSL assignment are assigned to senior leadership positions with significant and strategic importance to the future of the Army and DOD. Other developmental positions at the colonel level include positions on the OSD/Joint staff, operations officer/strategic planner, and deployed positions in theaters worldwide in support of acquisition operations” (Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management, 2014, pp. 438-442).

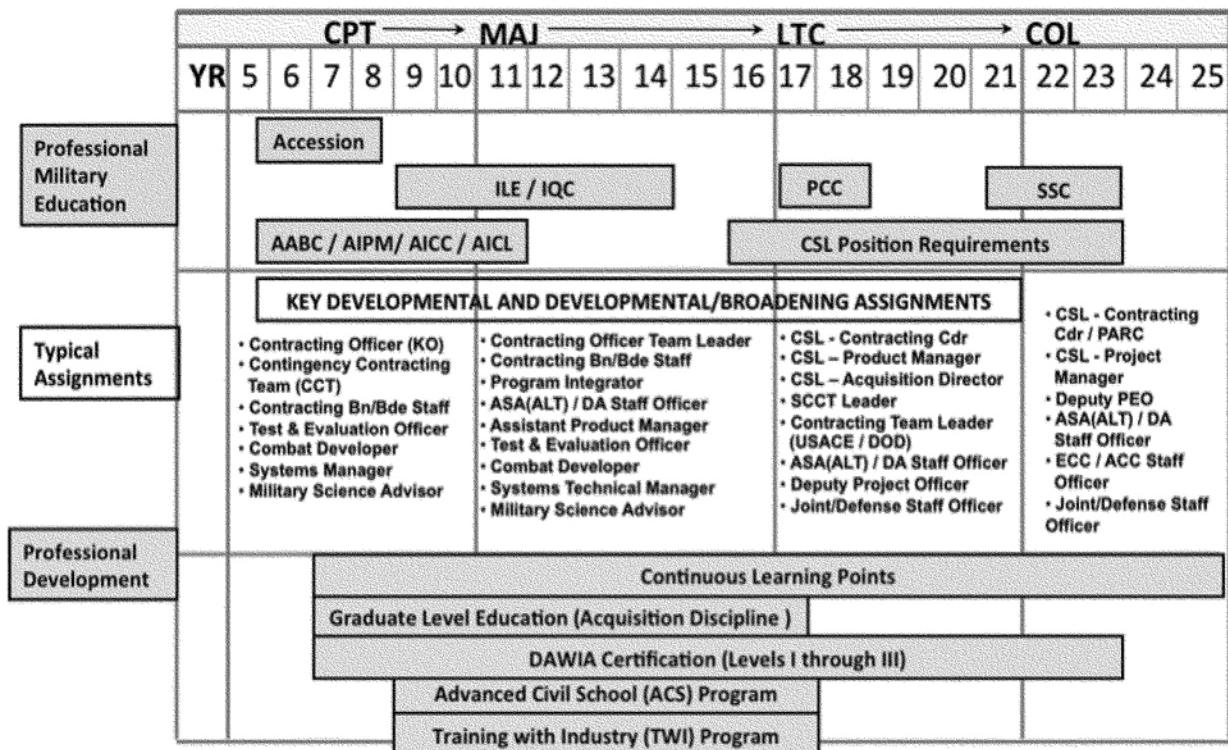


Figure 41–2. AC officer development

Board Selection Packages

Military members are required to submit two main documents to the selection board - Officer Record Brief (ORB) and Officer Evaluation Report (OER), to be considered for a board select position; while for civilians “The following documents must be updated and/or submitted using the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS) within the Career Acquisition Management Portal/Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAMP/CAPPMIS):

- Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB)
- Resume
- Last Three (3) performance evaluations (Including Support Forms)
- Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE) – Must be NLT 1 year old at the close date of the announcement
- Significant Award Certificates not evident on the ACRB
- Regional Preference Form (Located within AAPDS)
- Standard Form 50 (Most current – non-award)

NOTE: Applicants must submit ALL required documents to obtain consideration for this opportunity. Do NOT submit any additional forms/certificates/pictures/data.

Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB)

The latest version of your ACRB will automatically be pulled into your application. Ensure your ACRB is updated and correct prior to submission of application. Applicants may update and correct specific fields of their ACRB using the edit functions within CAPPMIS. For the areas in the ACRB that cannot be changed by the Applicant, please request assistance using our Army DACM Office online help desk

request at the following link: CAMP Helpdesk. Applicants should pay particular attention to the training, education, and assignment history sections of the ACRB, ensuring that the information is accurate. The training section should only reflect top level relevant training completed; recommend not including any DAU continuous learning modules or annual Army required training.

Resume

The resume is crucial to portraying the applicant's image as a potential senior leader in the Army Acquisition Corps. Applicants should expound on and highlight their accomplishments in leading and managing human and fiscal resources, materiel acquisition and project milestones with a focus on cost, schedule, and performance. This is the applicant's opportunity to highlight educational achievements, work experiences, skills, and accomplishments, which are key indicators to the preparation for and success as an acquisition professional.

There are NO prescribed formats or limits to the resume. However, the USAASC Army DACM Office highly recommends that you use the suggested format at Appendix A. Resume may not exceed 4 pages. Your position title and dates should match those same positions on your ACRB.

Evaluations

Civilian (Army) Evaluations: Each evaluation/appraisal submitted must also be accompanied with the corresponding Support Form(s). For individuals in the DoD Acquisition Workforce Demonstration Project, this shall include: Part I, CCAS Salary Appraisal Form, Part II, Supervisor Assessment, and Part III, Employee Self-Assessment.

For TAPES, this shall include DA Form 7222, the Senior System Civilian Evaluation Report, and DA Form 7222-1, Senior System Evaluation Report Support Form.

Civilian (non-Army/industry) Evaluations: Each evaluation must contain all elements of the evaluation required by the organization originating the assessment.

Military (Army) Evaluations: Evaluations submitted must be IAW AR 623-3 and AR 623-105, to include the final processing overstamp at the HRC.

Military (non-Army) Evaluations: Evaluations must be complete IAW the appropriate service regulation.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide complete evaluations and/or there are problems with evaluations submitted, you must provide a memo describing the problem. The information provided will be annotated in your board file. It is also recommended that you write a letter to the President of the Board to explain the problem and upload that signed letter within the Evaluation section of the application.

Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE)

A minimum of one SRPE is required with your application. The most recent SRPE must have an ending date (the “thru” date) no later than one year of the closing date of the announcement. With the introduction of annual SPREs for Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) GS-14 or broadband equivalents in FY15, most will have annual SRPEs to meet this requirement. However, those applicant that did not fall within this requirement, or do not have a SRPE, must initiate a SRPE to meet the board requirements. Senior Raters should view a SRPE as the equivalent to a “complete the record OER”, and should provide supporting comments accordingly. The SRPE must be completed and generated using CAMP/CAPP MIS. Instructions are available in the SRPE

module to assist the Senior Rater in completing the SRPE. The Senior Rater should not use bullet comments, but narrative comments to support the overall rating.

Note: in order to have a FY16 annual SRPE included in your application, the SRPE must be completed by your Rater and Senior Rater prior to the announcement close date of 7 October.

In accordance with Director, Acquisition Career Management (DPCM) SRPE Policy and SRPE Guidance, dated 10 July 2015 found at the USAASC policy web page under the SRPE section, the applicant's Senior Rater is the rate of the employee's rater. The SR must be a supervisor and senior in grade/organizational position to the rated employee. For additional information on the completion of the SRPE, Senior Raters should refer to the USAASC policy web page under the SRPE section. Applicants should print and retain a signed copy of the SRPE for their records. Signed copies of the SRPE are not required to be submitted with the application but must be finalized in the CAMP/CAPPMIS before the closing date of the announcement.

Awards

Applicants should ensure any relevant Army CIVILIAN awards are listed on their ACRB prior to submission of the application. To update the Awards Section of the ACRB with any of the awards listed below, email a copy of the award certificate to scott.m.greene14.civ@mail.mil. Do not include DA Form 1256 or other documentation; to update the ACRB, only the certificate will be accepted.

- Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service (DA Form 7014)
- Meritorious Civilian Service Award (DA Form 7015)
- Superior Civilian Service Award (DA Form 5655)

- Commanders Award for Civilian Service (DA Form 4689)
- Achievement Medal for Civilian Service (DA Form 5654)

Copies of equivalent civilian awards from Navy/Marine Corps/Air Force/may also be submitted.

Applicants who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces may submit copies of the award certificates, or the award certificate equal to the Army Awards indicated below. Do not include DA Form 638 or other documentation. Copies of certificates for all periods of service will be accepted. For these military awards that cannot be listed in the ACRB, the individual may upload them into their AAPDS application.

- Medal of Honor Certificate (DA Form 4980-1)
- Distinguished Service Cross Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-2)
- Distinguished Service Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-3)
- Silver Star Certificate (DA Form 4980-4)
- Bronze Star Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-5)
- Soldier's Medal Certificate (DA Form 4930-6)
- Distinguished Flying Cross Certificate (Heroism) (DA Form 4980-7)
- Distinguished Flying Cross Certificate (Achievement) (DA Form 4980-8)
- Air Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-9)
- Purple Heart Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-10)
- Legion of Merit Certificate (DA Form 4980-11)
- Meritorious Service Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-12)
- Army Commendation Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-13)

- Army Achievement Medal Certificate (DA Form 4980-18)

Regional Preference Form

Prior to the convening of the Review Board, all applicants will receive a Regional Preference Form. Submission is mandatory but will not be part of this initial application package. All applicants are required to fill out a regional preference form as part of the application process, however this form will not be viewed by the selection board. It is intended for use in the follow on slating process of selectees.

NOTE: IAW current policy, your preference for a certain region does NOT guarantee slating to the region(s) for which you are willing to serve. You may be slated to a position at any location. There is no guarantee that any position will be available within any region/location during the timeframe covered by this announcement. Slating of the best qualified selectee will proceed in accordance with established procedures; however, you will have the option to decline, without prejudice, a position that falls outside your specified region(s)/location(s). Declination of a position outside your preferred region/location or locality will remove you from the standing list, and you will have to reapply for consideration by future Product Manager/Acquisition Director, Key Billet Position Boards. Declination for a position included in your region(s)/location(s) of preference will be with prejudice, and you will be denied further opportunities to apply for Product Manager/Acquisition Director, Key Billet Positions at this grade and may be subject to other actions in accordance with Army Acquisition Policy.

Potential Positions

A list of potential positions will be provided to those selected. No guarantees are made or implied as to the availability of any position on the list. List may subsequently

contain more or less positions. List is provided for informational purposes only and for the identification of applicant desires.

Upon receipt of the list, you will indicate your preference from 1-n, by number, number 1 (one) being the position you most desire. Rank all positions according to the level of desire for that position.

Assignment to a position will be accomplished IAW the Army Acquisition Corps slating guidance. In no way will submission of this list be construed to mean a guarantee of assignment to any particular position or the availability of any position. These are desires only” (AAPDS, 2017).

CSL PM Selection Board Process

The selection board used to fill all CSL PM positions is the same board that is used to fill all Product/Project Director positions. “The selection of best-qualified individuals to fill CSL PM positions is based on statutory requirements stipulated in DAWIA. Because of the scope of responsibilities and importance of these positions, the DA Secretariat board process is used to select the best-qualified individuals. The Secretary of the Army is the convening authority for acquisition CSL boards.

Rotations of CSL PM positions will normally occur at three years, four years, or near major program milestones (based on Title 10 of the U.S.C. and the DAWIA) and will be scheduled to provide an overlap between incoming and outgoing individuals to the maximum extent possible. Other guidance regarding length of critical acquisition assignments is in 10 U.S.C. Chapter 87.

Note 1: ACAT I – Four-year billets at the COL level

Note 2: ACAT II and below and all LTC level: Three-year billets

The CSL board includes civilian and military AAC members who have demonstrated outstanding performance in challenging assignments and who represent various functional area specialties and acquisition organizations. By statute, the board must have five or more members and all must be a higher grade or rank than those being considered. Additionally, members must not have served on the previous Acquisition Director and Product/Project Manager Board. Policy requires members to possess a variety of acquisition skills and to be currently serving, or have previously served, as CSL commanders or PMs. Policy also requires minority and female representation and that military members be graduates of the Command and General Staff College (LTC/GS-14 level boards) and/or Senior Staff College (COL/GS-15 level boards). Potential board members are nominated by AMB but are selected by the Department of the Army Secretariat, the organization that conducts central selection boards on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

The Secretary of the Army provides guidance to the board by a Memorandum of Instruction (MOI). The MOI is the only written guidance provided to board members and includes directions regarding equal opportunity, the minimum and maximum number of individuals to be selected, and any special requirements needed for the positions being filled. However, the Army DACM/DDACM familiarizes the board on the general format/content of the civilian board files and the various civilian appraisal systems and the SRPE.

Board members use the MOI, the person's board file, and their own experience and judgement to paint a word picture of the applicant. The word picture is then converted to a numerical score or vote. The automated system protects the anonymity of each vote. Based on the votes of all members, a relative standing list (RSL) is produced. There is one RSL for principals and one for alternates.

When the board adjourns, HRC-AMB receives the RSL and prepares the slate.

Declinations: Civilians (whether principals or alternates) may decline without prejudice if the slate is outside the regional preference designation submitted with application. This means that they will remain eligible to compete in future years. All other declinations are deemed with prejudice. Declining with prejudice eliminates the civilian from consideration for all future command selection in the grade level” (2014 Handbook Civilian Project/Product Manager, 2014, pp. 21-22).

Who gets chosen for Army board select acquisition positions?

By far, military members are selected for the majority of Army board select acquisition positions; however, “April turned out to be a record-breaking month for the Army Acquisition Corps. One civilian was selected as primary for project manager and six as primaries for product managers – the highest number of civilians ever selected in the competitive centralized selection board.

The announcement marked a significant milestone for civilians, whose names increasingly are listed among military counterparts who traditionally dominated these positions. Of the more than 36,000 Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) professionals, civilians represent over 94% of the population, while those in the military (both commissioned and noncommissioned officers) make up just a little over 5 percent. And while the number of civilians selected may not seem that large, a closer look at the results is telling. Eighty-two civilians applied for FY17 project or product manager positions, and the quality of applications greatly improved from previous years, according to the Army Director for Acquisition Career Management (DPCM) Office.

Here's the breakdown: 31 civilians competed to be the best qualified for 14 positions in the GS-15/colonel project manager board. While the board selected one civilian as a primary, 12 were selected as alternates – making up 39 percent of the alternate list. In the case of the GS-14/lieutenant colonel product manager board, 51 civilians competed for 34 positions, resulting in six primaries and 27 alternates, or 35 percent of the alternate list.

So why now? What's changed for the civilian workforce? The Army DACM Office, an element of the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC), set out to answer those questions, analyzing the data and identifying trends associated with the Army's newest project and product managers. For those who have ever wondered what tipped the scales to determine why someone was selected, this analysis may lend some insight and help future candidates develop stronger, more competitive applications.

Some of the success can be attributed to several administrative changes that the Army DACM Office made to the application process this year, resulting in noticeable differences for the board from previous years.

“We streamlined several processes this year, really allowing the best applications to shine through,” said...the Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief, who led the centralized selection list (CSL) application process. To make sure all of the applications were consistent and comparable, he reduced the number of required documents, standardized the application template and provided detailed feedback to every applicant, providing the opportunity to revise and resubmit the application before it went forward.

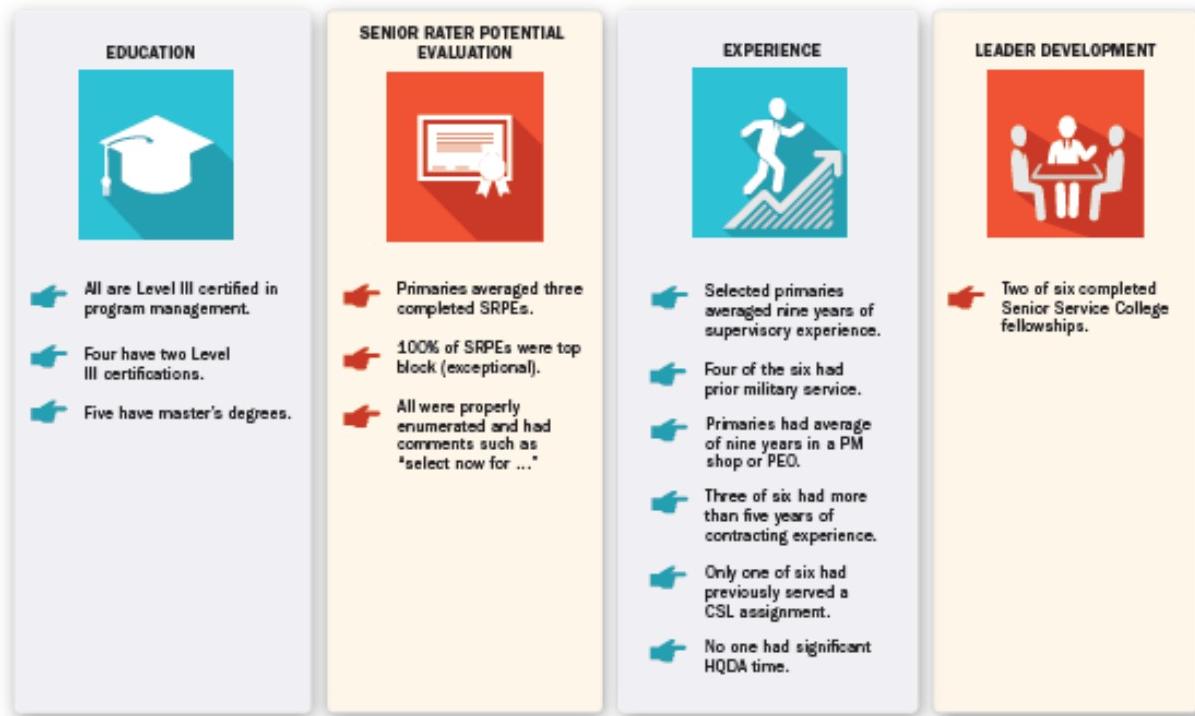
Civilian applications have to be manually converted into the DA format, causing a variety of format issues in previous years...Army DACM Office acquisition data management specialist, spent hours ensuring that the civilians' files transferred without any quality degradation,

allowing the review board to see clean civilian application documents. In earlier years, files went straight to the board without review, and some were illegible or completely blacked out” (Clements, 2016). The Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief “...changed that so that the Army DACM Office can identify formatting errors and get them fixed in advance.

But a key contributor to the quality of applicants this year comes straight from the top. As the Army DACM, Lt. Gen. Michael E. Williamson has made talent management one of his key priorities for the AAW since 2014, and he has implemented several initiative to help leaders identify and develop talent. They seem to be working. Not only is Williamson focusing on increasing the acumen and competitiveness of the civilian population, one of his initiatives specifically calls for leaders to encourage talented professionals to apply for CSL positions. “My goal is to create a pool of the right people with the right skills for the right jobs,” he said in a video outlining his talent management priorities for the AAW.

What's Trending

An analysis of the six primaries selected as GS-14 product managers highlighted significant trends in four key areas: education, evaluations, experience and leader development. (See Figure 1.)

FIGURE 1**PRODUCT MANAGER SELECTEES, IN PROFILE**

In examining the backgrounds of the six primaries selected as GS-14 product managers, the Army DACM Office identified significant trends in four key areas. [SOURCE: USAASC]

In education, all six selected primaries are Level III certified in program management, four have two Level III certifications and all but one have master's degrees" (Clements, 2016).

The Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief, "...who not only reviewed each application but also observed the board process, noted that when it came to evaluations, the Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE) carries the most weight. "The higher the senior rater, the better," (Clements, 2016) said the Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief. "Some applicants had an NH-03 [GS-13/14 equivalent] senior rater, but they should really have a GO [general officer] or SES [Senior Executive Service member] to be more competitive."

The primaries averaged three completed SRPE's in their application" (Clements, 2016). The Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief "...noted that while not a requirement,

multiple SRPEs with an exceptional rating stand out more than someone who doesn't have an SRPE history. Collectively, all of the SRPEs were exceptional and specified contributions, including direct comments such as "select now for..." (Clements, 2016) the Army DACM Leader Development Chief added: "Senior raters need to quantify or enumerate where the person is in relation to others to demonstrate the applicant's potential to a board."

"When it comes to experience," (Clements, 2016) the Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief "...said that the board is looking for leadership potential and consistent demonstrated past performance through a diversity of experience. A review of the primaries selected revealed an average of nine years of supervisory experience and time in a program executive office (PEO) or program manager (PM) shop for each primary. Two of the primaries did not have prior military experience, countering a perception among the workforce that only those with prior service are competitive. Half of them have over five years of contracting experience, one previously served in a CSL assignment and no one had any significant time working at HQDA.

As for leader development, two of the selectees completed the Defense Acquisition University Senior Service College Fellowship. According to" (Clements, 2016) the Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief, "...here's why that's important: If a civilian has Senior Service College under their belt, it provides a competitive edge for a GS-14 over the lieutenant colonel counterparts because military applicants don't have a chance to attend until they are a colonel.

On The Horizon: FY18 Application Season (Clements, 2016).

The Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief "... plans to keep improving the process for the FY18 CSL application. "For the upcoming application, we'll provide an updated

resume template and a more user-friendly regional preference form with only available locations listed. We'll also have the 1-N list of positions included in the application this year as well."

As for other tips from" (Clements, 2016) the Army DACM Leader Development Branch Chief "...on how to increase the strength of an application, he stressed the importance of three key items:

- Make sure your resume and Acquisition Career Record Brief match.
- Focus your resume succinctly on cost, schedule and performance. Don't make the board members hunt for it!
- Have a mentor or your senior rater go over your entire CSL application with you prior to submitting. The Army DACM Office is available to give you a sanity check, too; however, you should always engage a second set of eyes before submitting.

Conclusion

For those who have been on the receiving end of the "unfortunately, you were not selected" notices, how your application stacked up against others isn't always clear – but understanding the trends associated with those who were selected can be helpful. And while the Army DACM Office isn't promising a recipe for success, these trends and tips demonstrate what's been working for others, and likely things for future applicants to keep in mind" (Clements, 2016).

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology used to explore the research questions. The chapter includes an overview of the purpose of the research, the research questions, the research design, institutional review board approval, and the data analysis methodology.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which the Army has prepared its civilians, to compete with individuals with military experience, for Army board select acquisition positions; and to what extent there are biases in the board select acquisition process.

Research Questions

This research paper addresses two questions related to civilians' preparedness to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions:

1. To what extent does the Army provide civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions?
2. To what extent are there biases in the board select acquisition process?

Research Design

The researcher employed a mixed research methodology – quantitative and qualitative, using interviews to collect the data. The interviews included demographic and open-ended, qualitative questions. The questions were electronically distributed, via email, in advance of the interviews. The population of those interviewed, were nine key senior Army leaders (military members and civilians) that have led or served on Army acquisition selection boards, have competed successfully using the Army acquisition board selection process, or are owners/supporters of the Army acquisition board selection process.

The interview instrument consisted of 18 questions that solicited 21 responses. The opening section had six questions that captured demographic data regarding current position, amount of experience working for the Army as a civilian and/or military member, experience and success applying for a board select acquisition position, and experience serving on an acquisition selection board. The demographic data was used to verify that the interviewees were in the targeted population. The balance of the questions were open-ended questions regarding biases in the board select acquisition process (questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13), and to what extent the Army provides civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions (questions 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18).

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

Prior to the collection of the data, the researcher obtained approval to conduct this research using human participants, from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Lawrence Technological University (LTU). The researcher followed guidelines that protect the rights and welfare related to their voluntary and confidential participation in this research. The IRB approval required the completion of the IRB Application for Approval to Conduct Research with Human Participants, the LTU Consent Form, and the LTU Confidentiality Agreement. The IRB approved the application for research on February 10, 2017 for a period of one year. The IRB approval letter is attached as Appendix A. The IRB is chaired by Dr. Matthew Cole, Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board, at irb@ltu.edu, Lawrence Technological University, 21000 West Ten Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48075, (248) 204-3096 (Budzichowski, 2014, p. 25).

Data Analysis Methodology

The analysis for the quantitative data consisted of descriptive statistical analysis. The open-ended, qualitative questions in the interview were used to gather data on to what extent the

Army provides civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions, and about biases in the board select acquisition process. The responses to the open-ended, qualitative questions were evaluated and thematically categorized by the researcher.

Chapter 4 – Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to provide an assessment of civilians' preparedness to compete with individuals with military experience for Army board select acquisition positions. This chapter contains research findings and analysis of the results. Descriptive statistics, and qualitative results using thematic analysis are presented. Descriptive statistics are presented first.

The following research questions were explored in this research:

1. To what extent does the Army provide civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions?
2. To what extent are there biases in the board select acquisition process?

Population & Sample Size

The researcher interviewed nine key senior Army leaders (military members and civilians) that have led or served on Army acquisition selection boards, have competed successfully using the Army acquisition board selection process, or are owners/supporters of the Army acquisition board selection process.

Descriptive Statistics

The respondents were asked seven demographic questions, which resulted in the information in the following seven tables (Tables 1-7). Descriptive statistics are noted in the paragraphs above each of the seven tables (Tables 1-7).

The pay grade distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 1. Only senior level Army leaders (civilians: GS 14-15 and Senior Executive Service members (SES); and military members: 05-06, and 07-09) were interviewed for this research.

Table 1 – Pay Grade Distribution

	Response Percent	Response Count
GS 14-15 / 05-06	56%	5
SES / 07-09	44%	4
Total	100%	9

The years worked for the Army distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 2. Only experienced senior level Army leaders (25 years or more of service to the Army) were interviewed for this research.

Table 2 – Years Worked for the Army Distribution

	Response Percent	Response Count
25-29	22%	2
30-34	56%	5
35-39	22%	2
Total	100%	9

The years worked for the Army - military distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 3. Sixty-six percent of the senior level Army leaders that were interviewed for this research had 11 to 40 years of military experience.

Table 3 – Years Worked for the Army - Military Distribution

	Response Percent	Response Count
0	33%	3
1-10	0%	0
11-20	11%	1
21-30	33%	3
31-40	22%	2
Total	100%	9

The years worked for the Army - civilian distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 4. Fifty-five percent of the senior level Army leaders that were interviewed for this research had 21 to 40 years of civilian experience.

Table 4 – Years Worked for the Army - Civilian Distribution

	Response Percent	Response Count
0	22%	2
1-10	22%	2
11-20	0%	0
21-30	22%	2
31-40	33%	3
Total	100%	9

The number of times applied/success applying for board select acquisition positions distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 5. Seventy-eight percent of the senior level Army leaders that were interviewed for this research applied one or more times for a board select acquisition position, and 67% were successful one to three times.

Table 5 – Number of Times Applied/Success Applying for Board Select Acquisition Positions Distribution

	Response Percent Applied 05/06	Response Count	Response Percent Success	Response Count
0	22%	2	33%	3
1-3	56%	5	67%	6
4-6	11%	1	0%	0
7-9	0%	0	0%	0
10-12	0%	0	0%	0
13-15	11%	1	0%	0
Total	100%	9	100%	9

The number of times served on an acquisition selection board distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 6. Sixty-six percent of the senior level Army leaders that were interviewed for this research served on one or more acquisition selection boards.

Table 6 – Number of Times Served on an Acquisition Selection Board Distribution

	Response Percent Served 05/06	Response Count
0	33%	3
1-3	44%	4
4-6	11%	1
7-9	11%	1
Total	100%	9

Open-ended Questions

The respondents were asked the following 12 open-ended questions (Tables 7-18). The responses to the open-ended questions were evaluated and thematically categorized by the researcher. Since each respondent could provide many responses, that were then thematically categorized, the number of responses can add up to more than the number of respondents; and therefore, the response percent can be greater than 100%. Note that an “Other Responses” category was added, where applicable, to capture additional relevant information that was provided on the topics by the owner of the Army acquisition board selection process. In addition, for the most part,

the owner of the Army acquisition board selection process's responses were left in their entirety, due to the relevant content of the responses.

Table 7 – What aspects of the individual’s board file makes a candidate competitive and distinguishes that file from others?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
6	67%	Potential (OERs for military members / SRPEs for civilians), Senior leader comments, “Word picture”
5	56%	Past performance
4	44%	Leadership experience
4	44%	Diversity of assignments
3	33%	Past success in cost, schedule, and performance
2	22%	Progress of positions/assignments, each with more responsibility than the previous one
1	11%	Schools
1	11%	Technical experience
1	11%	File well organized, detailed, and error free
Other Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	Board members consider the total applicant; however, they have to garner that total picture in a short amount of time.

Table 8 – Of these aspects the candidate needs to be competitive and high on the Order of Merit List (OML) (Table 7), do you see different trends or challenges based on a file with military experience, versus a file with civilian experience? If so, please explain.

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
6	67%	Civilians have a less structured career path, timeline varies a lot, and fewer leadership/supervisor positions and training. They have a functional orientation
5	56%	Military have a defined career path. Easier to recognize the key points in military files: very consistent, and timelines very consistent. Boards more accustomed to military positions. Military evaluations – less words, more impact
3	33%	Civilians are less diversified in experience and job locations, but may be in critical jobs longer.
2	22%	SRPE is critical. Having a large file of consistently high potential SRPEs carries a lot of weight with the boards. Challenge is to have a number of different senior raters with strong comments – build a file
1	11%	Civilians do not have the necessary prerequisite PM positions (APM, time in the building – XO, DASC, broadening PM assignments) - that makes their military counterparts stand out as having the potential to be more successful.
1	11%	Military – best of best are applying; any civilian can apply
1	11%	Civilian files not as consistent (Many different appraisal systems. Many hard to understand)/mature (Implementation of SRPE not consistent)
Other Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	No other Functional Area or Branch allows civilians to compete for CSL in a best qualified approach with military counterparts. Acquisition is the only one. So the system is inherently a military model. We have made great strides working to ensure civilians have significant opportunities to succeed and can compete on as level a playing field as possible. One such initiative is my civilian only Product and Project Director central selection opportunity. This talent management initiative gives civilians an opportunity to get experience running a program as well as the leadership experience of managing a program.

Table 9 – Are there aspects of the individual’s file or board select acquisition process that are more advantageous to civilian experience, compared to those with military experience? If so, please explain.

“Yes” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
5	56%	Civilians not on strict up or out timeline, like military members, so they can spend more time in critical PM jobs: APM, chief functional expert in PM shop, and Deputy PM. Greater depth of experience
1	11%	Civilians have multiple opportunities to apply for board select positions unlike their military counterparts.
1	11%	Former military experience can only be input on a resume – no OERs; therefore, that military experience may be overlooked/or not equated to current military member’s experience.
“No” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
2	22%	No
Other Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	I wouldn’t say there are advantages or disadvantages. The system is built around a military model so the more a civilian who is interested in becoming a PM tries to mirror the military model, the better. My Army DACM Office has worked tirelessly to ensure that our acquisition civilian professionals have similar experiences and opportunities using the military model as a benchmark. Today, we have civilian acquisition career models for every Acquisition Career Field (ACF). These 30-year career models have been built using the acquisition military models as a benchmark. Check out the PM ACF model. If a civilian has a goal to be a PM in 10 years, there are certain training, education and experience recommendations that will guide a civilian’s individual development plan. I also have ensured within the civilian 0340 Occupational Series, that there are standardized Position Requirements Descriptions for all PM positions leading to a CSL PM. What this does is set the civilian up for success during a board review. If all the board members understand what the position entails, there is a better understanding of the experience that civilian brings to the table. Generally, everyone knows what an Assistant PM position is for military. Now, with these standardized PRDs it will be understandable which positions are civilian and correspond with their military counterparts thereby leveling the playing field.

Table 10 – Are there aspects of the individual’s file or board select acquisition process that are more advantageous to those with military experience, compared to those with civilian experience? If so, please explain.

“Yes” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
4	44%	Breadth of experience. More diversified in both experience and location
3	33%	Board more familiar with OERs. Consistency of the military development on a fixed timeline making their files easier to understand and rack and stack. Having a consistent development process and timeline makes it easier for the military to maintain a good file. It is used for everything (promotions, jobs, and command selection process). On the civilian side, civilians worry very little about what their file looks like and many times only put a file together to compete for a CSL job or school, which is too late.
3	33%	Leadership training and experience. History of annual reviews of their performance and potential
1	11%	More likely to get the “right” words from senior leaders for board file
1	11%	Employment assistance for spouses

Table 11 – With regard to the board select acquisition process, what are the most critical criteria considered in the selection decision making process?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
5	56%	Past performance in key jobs
4	44%	Potential
4	44%	Senior leader comments and who they came from
2	22%	Leadership experience
2	22%	Senior Service College Fellowship/Senior Service College
1	11%	Technical experience
1	11%	Diversity of experience and location
1	11%	High level medal/award

Table 11a – Do any of these criteria favor civilians over those with military experience?

“Yes” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	Civilians not on fixed timeline so more opportunities to get the right jobs over time
1	11%	Civilians do have the opportunity to fine tune their acquisition functional experience and credentials since they can come into acquisition at the beginning of their career. Our military do not access into acquisition until the 7-8 year mark in their military career. So, it is important for civilian acquisition professionals to manage their career development from day one – get your DAWIA certification, take advantage of Army DACM Office career and leadership development opportunities – plan your acquisition career and set goals to get where you need to go and plan for the future. Leaders of civilian acquisition professionals should foster growth and posture for success.
“No” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
7	78%	None

Table 11b – Do any of these criteria favor those with military experience over civilians?

“Yes” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
3	33%	More leadership experience
1	11%	Medals, and career development consistent so easy to see if they had the right jobs
1	11%	More diversity of experience
1	11%	Senior leader comments come from PEO - weigh more
1	11%	More operational experience
“No” Responses		
3	33%	None
Other Responses		
1	11%	Bottom-line, as long as those civilians that want to be PMs start the process earlier in their career, the criteria does not favor one over the other. This means an individual is planning 5-10 years before they want to compete for CSL and ensure they have the right developmental jobs as well as an annual SRPE.

Table 12a – What are the strengths and weaknesses overall of a civilian versus those with military experience competing for board select acquisition positions?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
3	33%	Civilians more PMO and functional experience - SAM and APM roles
3	33%	Military members pre-equipped with leadership training and hardcore leadership jobs. Civilians not as equipped
2	22%	Military – broad experiences
1	11%	Civilian files not consistent and therefore not always easy to find important discriminators. The standard files make it easier to tell the potential of military and how the military rack and stack. Military files seen on a CSL board are almost all great files.
1	11%	Every military competes for PM assignments. Not the case for civilians.
1	11%	05 level civilian's strength. Greater technical competence
1	11%	06 PM has already been selected by PM board
1	11%	Military 05 one or two AMP jobs. Civilian 05 many APM positions. Every military competes for one PM assignment, while civilians may be a 06 multiple times.

Table 12b – What recommendations would you make to better prepare a civilian or those with military experience to compete for a board select acquisition position?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
5	56%	Take diverse and hard jobs (SAM, APM, DASC, DPM, PCO, supervisor, G-8) at different organizations and locations. Critical to get time outside PM office. Go to DC. Know how the building works.
2	22%	Gain leadership & operational experience via rotational and developmental assignments.
2	22%	Take leadership opportunities specifically for civilian acquisition workforce: Acquisition Leadership Development Program (ALCP – levels B, I and II depending on your grade), Competitive Development Group/Army Acquisition Fellowship (CDG/AAF), Defense Civilian Emerging Leader Program (DCLEP), Inspiring and Developing Excellence in Acquisition Leaders (IDEAL), and the Army's premier program in acquisition leadership – the DAU Senior Service College Fellowship (DAU-SSCF). Also numerous training opportunities within the Civilian Education System (CES) – Foundations course up to Senior Service College. Volunteer for leadership assignments in and outside of workplace: churches, civic organizations, fraternities, sororities, alumni associations, and homeowner associations.
1	11%	Important to find a mentor or coach

Table 13 – Is there parity between civilians and those with military experience in the board select acquisition process? If not, what are the one or two changes that you would recommend to infuse parity?

“Yes” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	Parity
1	11%	Overall parity. Need to continue to educate civilians how the board process works, what the board will see and what makes a good file versus a great file.
“No” Responses		
2	22%	Equal opportunity not always equal results. Better guidelines for SRPEs. Military description easy to discern center of mass. Civilians – no consistency of file. Orient board to CCAS. ORB = ACRB; OER = SRPE. Have come a long way
1	11%	The board process is absolutely fair and parity is accomplished when there is parity in both functional and leadership experience.
1	11%	No parity. Develop common evaluation files, increase civilian leadership experience, and rotational developmental assignments
1	11%	File structure. No decoder ring to figure out job description part
1	11%	No parity. Military make Major/LTC no choice going before board. Military some good and some bad - one to two years of acquisition experience. Civilians 5 or 6 years of acquisition experience. Doesn't give enough emphasis to civilian leadership. Retired military experience vs. military experience treated different.
1	11%	I strongly believe in fairness and equity whenever evaluating individuals for our positions. One method we use to infuse parity in the board select process is to require a SRPE from civilian applicants to evaluate the individual's potential - similar to way we evaluate potential of military candidates. My Army DACM office has also taken measures to ensure that the board packages of civilians and military are similar in general appearance, in order for board members to perform fair evaluations and not be swayed by the “look and feel” of one package over another. Despite our best efforts to institute parity, the military seem to have the advantage when it comes to LTC/GS-14 and COL/GS-15 Centralized Selection List positions, due to their leadership experience. My office and I are doing everything we can to offer opportunities to enhance civilians' leadership skills. And of course I encourage civilians to take advantage of any opportunities to grow in that area.
Other Responses		
1	11%	The board composition is equal with military and civilian board members. The board president rotates between military and civilian. The board is also specifically briefed in detail about civilian records, evaluations, and typical assignments.

Table 14 – How the Army has prepared its civilians to compete for board select acquisition positions?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	Developed career roadmaps, requiring SRPEs, use of IDPs, creation of Product/Project Director positions for civilians only
1	11%	SAM program, CDG, KLP, SSC, Acquisition certifications
1	11%	Lunch & Learn on board select positions, package improvements, talent management, SAM program, IDPs managed, developmental opportunities, Acquisition Certifications, Masters Degrees, SSCF
1	11%	Career path discussions. Not as good as military.
1	11%	Army offered opportunities. Not forced like military. Communication
1	11%	It's a challenge. Broad career models and career paths, personal assistance with files, advice and counsel, CDG, SSCF program, rotational assignments, positions description and job titles standardization
1	11%	Not very well. To be a civilian you have to make it happen. Need to be well rounded vs. having an important signature block
1	11%	Overall the information is there needed for civilians to know what needs to be done, but usually everyone is so busy that don't investigate what it takes until they are applying for the board which is obviously too late. There is probably a many prong approach to improve. First the individual has to identify being a PM is on their career path then the individual and supervisor can make sure that the civilian gets the right jobs and training/education. Also have to continue to educate and campaign to get the top quality civilians to compete. Must stress to civilians early what a military file looks like and how important it is to maintain and be aware of your file. Leadership has to identify early folks that they think would make good PMs and mentor them to take the right jobs and classes.
1	11%	I instituted a Talent Management initiative and focus for our Civilian acquisition professionals when I became the PMILDEP/Director of the Army Acquisition Corps in 2014. I recognized the need for civilians to have increased Program Management leadership opportunities. My thought was that if we can give civilians an opportunity for a board select position to hone their PM skills prior to an ACAT I-III PM position, they will compete well at the DA Secretariat Centralized Selection List Board. In 2015, our first civilian-only Product Directors (PDs) were slated. And, we are seeing success. One of the 2015 PDs is on the CSL as a principal for 2018.

Other preparations include a focus on civilian acquisition career development tools. My Army DACM Office in conjunction with acquisition functional experts developed a 30-year acquisition career development roadmap/model. This model is a benchmark from our FA51 Officer Model. There are requirements indicated such as DAWIA certification attainment, other functional training opportunities, leadership development opportunities, CES leadership course details, an indication of position titles, board select opportunities, and a depiction of a 30 year acquisition civilian professional career from recruitment to retirement.

Leadership development is an evolving component of a civilian career from day one – something we learned from our military model. We have an Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program at every level focused from a tools perspective to give civilian acquisition professionals with some information about leadership strengths and challenges to focus on back in the office. We also offer a Competitive Development Group/Army Acquisition Fellowship Program that provides GS-12/13 acquisition professionals with a three-year opportunity to further develop via developmental opportunities within a Program Management Office, within a Contracting Office, within a HQ element, etc. In addition, there are specific leadership training requirements. At the GS-14/15 level, we offer a 10-month Senior Service College Fellowship Program at three regional locations: Aberdeen, Huntsville, and Warren. This is a MEL 1 equivalent course providing leadership insight. Ultimately, the goal is that we have an acquisition career development path for our civilian acquisition professional to follow and specific functional and leader development opportunities along the way to ensure success. As leaders, our job is to Foster Growth and Posture our Civilian and Military Acquisition Professionals for Success.

Table 15 – How the Army has prepared those with military experience to compete for board select acquisition positions?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
3	33%	Human Resource Command manages every officer and their file. Pretty clear what kind of jobs you will have when and how long
3	33%	Leadership experience & training, APM, acquisition certifications
2	22%	Non-voluntary assignments to hard jobs in multiple locations
1	11%	Compete for promotions. Potential assessments – OERs

Table 16 – Is military experience beneficial to candidates applying for board select acquisition positions? If so, what are ways a civilian can get similar experience to be competitive?

“Yes” Responses		
# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
5	56%	Yes military experience, especially leadership is beneficial. Civilians need to take diverse and hard jobs (APM, DASC, DPM, PCO, and supervisor) at different organizations and locations (For example: the Pentagon). This experience must be documented. SRPEs need to be done.
3	33%	Yes leadership and operational experience especially. Civilians can get this experience through rotational and developmental assignments
1	11%	It does not hurt because of how disciplined and consistent the development path is and the leadership skills they are trained on. With the exception of military training, the civilians can get the same types of jobs and career path.
1	11%	For retired military only, if they held a 05/06 in the military, of great value when competing as a civilian for 05/06 jobs
1	11%	Absolutely. The leadership experience that military candidates possess is extremely beneficial. In my answer to question #12, I touched on several ways that civilians can obtain leadership experiences for themselves. But it's not just the leadership strength that gives our military an advantage. There are other aspects of military service that enhance a candidate's standing. For example, military members move every few years or sometimes more often than that. This moving around and changing of assignments helps them deal with change – it also helps them act and react with flexibility and resilience in our always-changing acquisition environment. The frequent change of environment – new work, new supervisors, new colleagues and new subordinates – contributes to their adaptability. In order for civilians to help themselves to level the playing field with the military, I highly encourage civilians to be mobile and open to relocation. While I don't encourage job-hopping, I do think that periodic changes in assignment/office/command give the civilian a broader exposure to Army programs and make that civilian much more valuable; and those varied experiences contribute to the civilian's adaptability, resilience and flexibility. If the board is looking at a civilian's file and that person has been in the same location most/all of their career and/or they have served in the same type of position most/all of their career, that file is NOT going to get selected. Files where a civilian has moved around between jobs getting the right types of experiences, locations, completed all the necessary training, have been successful in their past positions, and have an extensive above center of mass SRPE file with various senior raters – that is a civilian who is going to be successful when applying.

Table 17 – What is the Army's formal training program for civilians to become a 05/06 leader of an acquisition program – Product Director, Project Director, Product Manager, and Project Manager?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	Not one. Doesn't need to be. Pretty clear and standard development model to be a PM that an individual needs to be aware of and follow to be competitive. Civilians would benefit from training on the process and the importance of keeping up a good file.
1	11%	CES leadership training coupled with OJT – taking diverse and hard jobs (APM, DASC, DPM, PCO, and supervisor) at different organizations and locations
1	11%	PM functional experience, Level I, II, III certifications, SAM, APM, Deputy, SSC, PdM, and PM
1	11%	SAM program
1	11%	Acquisition certifications, education, and experience. CES not taken seriously. Not enough slots. Need more push and screening for CES
1	11%	Career roadmap on ASC website. Training and CES. Including DAU training
1	11%	Formal is misleading. No formal compliance. Career path is notional. Up to them and supervisor to communicate
1	11%	CDG – key positions. Nothing if you choose. Working in the Pentagon. Not a lot of opportunity. Shadowing good but you can't put it on resume. PEO staff good opportunity, but staff is entrenched - no real rotations
1	11%	All sorts of training exist for Army acquisition civilians. My staff within the DACM Office has done a great job developing civilian career models for each acquisition career field as I discussed earlier. Acquisition training starts with DAWIA and getting certified for your position. That expands in scope and responsibility as promotions occur. Complementary to certification is the Army's Civilian Education System requirement. In addition to that we have various acquisition leadership opportunities along the career path to build upon those foundational and functional skills gained in CES and DAU training. Programs such as Defense Civilian Emerging Leaders Program, the Competitive Development Group, Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program, and finally culminating in Senior Service College or ideally the Senior Service College Fellowship we sponsor are critical to ensure future success. There are also significant opportunities to have a Master's degree funded centrally, whether through your career program or through one of our DACM Office opportunities.

Table 18 – What is the Army’s formal training program for the military to become a 05/06 leader of an acquisition program – Product Manager, and Project Manager?

# of responses	Response Percent	Topic
1	11%	Every career field has a very formal career development model which manages the officers’ jobs and training along a standard timeline.
1	11%	Diverse and hard jobs (APM, DASC, DPM, PCO, and supervisor) at different organizations and locations.
1	11%	PM office assignment Level I, II, III certifications, APM, DASC, PdM, and PM
1	11%	Certifications, assignments in “KD” Career Developing positions, and leadership development training
1	11%	AR 70-1 & AR 70-3
1	11%	Formal branch jobs, level III certifications
1	11%	Acquisition experience. Day selected in acquisition corps. Afforded opportunities: formal leadership training, and jobs. Access potential. APM to be a PM
1	11%	HRC
1	11%	DA PAM 600-3 lines this out in full for Functional Area 51 (FA51) military acquisition officers. In general, upon accession into the Army Acquisition Corps at the 7-8 year mark in their Army career, a senior Captain has already received extensive training and had the opportunity to lead (completed the Captain’s Career Course and had Company Command). Once assessed into FA51, we send our officers to the Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE) school house to receive the bulk of their introduction to Army acquisition along with their DAWIA training requirements. After the AACoE introductory courses and experience in the field, FA51 Officers also attend Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC) training. IQC is a critical a component of ensuring they are Intermediate Level Education (ILE) complete prior to competing for the boards.

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the interviews. The chapter began with revisiting the statement of purpose, population and sample size, and research questions presented in Chapter 1. Next, descriptive statistics for the sample data collected were presented. This was followed by thematic summaries for the open-ended, qualitative questions. The conclusions drawn from the analysis presented in this chapter will be presented in Chapter 5, Conclusions and Recommendations.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study, is to determine the extent to which the Army has prepared its civilians, to compete with individuals with military experience, for Army board select acquisition positions; and to what extent there are biases in the board select acquisition process. This chapter interprets the results for the two research questions presented in Chapter 4.

Research Question 1

Research question 1 is: To what extent does the Army provide civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions?

The literature highlights that the Army is providing civilians the tools to make them competitive for board select acquisition positions. Two of the major tools are the Army Acquisition Career Development Model and Program Management Career Model. The Army Acquisition Career Development Model provides civilians the big picture roadmap (...“Statutory certification training...professional education and leadership training specific to acquisition civilians...and the functional, broadening, and strategic experience suggested to attain the pinnacle of an acquisition career). All this information is tied to where an acquisition workforce member is in their career based on grade...hence, providing a guide to ensure one is on track toward career success” (Career Planning Steps, 2017). In addition, by following the specific Career Model for Program Managers, the recommended steps to planning one’s career in Program Management, and the post certification requirements/opportunities, a civilian has the detailed roadmap to obtain the skills necessary to be competitive for a Program Management position. As the literature details, the professional development and career management for Army acquisition officers is different

than for civilians, and even though Army is providing the tools for civilians to be competitive for board select positions, they are not competing well.

In the interviews, open-ended question 12a (Table 12a), in response to the question: What are the strength and weaknesses overall of a civilian versus those with military experience competing for board select acquisition positions? The two opinions that received the highest count (33% each) were that civilians have more PMO and functional experience - SAM and APM roles; and military members are pre-equipped with leadership training and hardcore leadership jobs. Civilians are not as equipped.

When asked open-ended question 12b (Table 12b): What recommendations would you make to better prepare civilians or those with military experience to compete for a board select acquisition position? The overwhelming response (56%) was to take diverse and hard jobs (SAM, APM, DASC, DPM, PCO, supervisor, G-8), at different organizations, and locations; that it was critical to get time outside the PM office; go to DC; and know how the building works.

In response to open-ended question 14 (Table 14): How has the Army prepared its civilians to compete for board select acquisition positions? All respondents had a different view. The process owner for the Army board select acquisition process highlighted the Talent Management initiative and focus for civilian acquisition professionals that he instituted in 2014. Under this initiative, he created the civilian-only Product Director positions to give civilians an opportunity to hone their PM skills and compete better for CSL boards. The fact that all respondents had a different view on this question, may highlight the need for education on this topic.

When asked open-ended question 15 (Table 15): How has the Army prepared those with military experience to compete for board select acquisition positions? The two opinions that received the highest count (33% each) were that Human Resource Command manages every

officer and their file; so it is pretty clear what kind of jobs you will have, and when, and how long; and leadership experience and training, APM positions, and acquisition certifications.

In response to open-ended question 16 (Table 16): Is military experience beneficial to candidates applying for board select acquisition positions? If so, what are the ways a civilian can get similar experience to be competitive? The overwhelming response (56%) was that yes, military experience, especially leadership is beneficial. Civilians need to take diverse and hard jobs (APM, DASC, DPM, PCO, and supervisor), at different organizations, and locations (for example - the Pentagon); this experience must be documented; and SRPEs need to be done.

When asked open-ended question 17 (Table 17): What is the Army's formal program to become a 05/06 leader of an acquisition program – Product Director, Project Director, Product Manager, and Project Manager? All respondents had a different view. The process owner of the Army board select acquisition process highlights “All sorts of training exist for Army acquisition civilians. My staff within the DACM Office has done a great job developing civilian career models for each acquisition career field as I discussed earlier. Acquisition training starts with DAWIA and getting certified for your position. That expands in scope and responsibility as promotions occur. Complementary to certification is the Army’s Civilian Education System requirement. In addition to that we have various acquisition leadership opportunities along the career path to build upon those foundational and functional skills gained in CES and DAU training. Programs such as Defense Civilian Emerging Leaders Program, the Competitive Development Group, Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program, and finally culminating in Senior Service College or ideally the Senior Service College Fellowship we sponsor are critical to ensure future success. There are also significant opportunities to have a Master’s degree funded centrally, whether through your career

program or through one of our DACM Office opportunities.” The fact that all respondents had a different view on this question, may highlight the need for education on this topic.

In response to open-ended question 18 (Table 18): What is the Army’s formal training program for the military to become a 05/06 leader of an acquisition program – Product Manager, and Project Manager? All respondents had a different view on this question. The process owner for the Army board select acquisition process, provided a detailed response “DA PAM 600-3 lines this out in full for Functional Area 51 (FA51) military acquisition officers. In general, upon accession into the Army Acquisition Corps at the 7-8 year mark in their Army career, a senior Captain has already received extensive training and had the opportunity to lead (completed the Captain’s Career Course and had Company Command). Once assessed into FA51, we send our officers to the Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE) school house to receive the bulk of their introduction to Army acquisition along with their DAWIA training requirements. After the AACoE introductory courses and experience in the field, FA51 Officers also attend Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC) training. IQC is a critical a component of ensuring they are Intermediate Level Education (ILE) complete prior to competing for the boards.” The fact that all respondents had a different view on this question, may highlight the need for education on this topic.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 is: To what extent are there biases in the board select acquisition process?

The literature does not highlight any biases in the board select acquisition process. Although the requirements for the board selection packages are different for military members and civilians, they do not introduce any biases into the process. In addition, the Command Select List

program management selection process is military based, but the literature does not highlight any biases as a result.

In the interviews, open-ended question 7 (Table 7): What aspects of the individual's board file makes a candidate competitive and distinguishes that file from others? The majority of the respondents - 67%, said potential (OERs for military members/SRPEs for civilians); senior leader comments; and the "word picture". The other top response mentioned by 56% of the respondents was past performance.

When asked open-ended question 8 (Table 8): Of these aspects the candidate needs to be competitive and high on the Order of Merit List (OML) (Table 7), do you see different trends or challenges based on a file with military experience, versus a file with civilian experience? If so, please explain. The majority of the respondents - 67%, said that civilians have a less structured career path; their timeline varies a lot; they have fewer leadership/supervisor positions and training; and they have a functional orientation. The second highest response - 56% of the respondents said that military members have a defined career path; that it's easier to recognize the key points in military members' files (which are very consistent); their timelines are very consistent; boards are more accustomed to military positions; and military members' evaluations have less words and more impact.

In response to open-ended question 9 (Table 9): Are there aspects of the individual's file or board select acquisition process that are more advantageous to civilian experience, compared to those with military experience? If so, please explain. The majority of the respondents - 56% said yes, and explained that civilians are not on a strict up or out timeline, like the military members, so they can spend more time in critical PM jobs: APM, chief functional expert in PM shop, and Deputy PM; and have a greater depth of experience.

When asked open-ended question 10 (Table 10): Are there aspects of the individual's file or board select acquisition process that are more advantageous to those with military experience, compared to those with civilian experience? If so, please explain. The majority of the respondents - 44% said yes, breadth of experience; and more diversified in both experience and location.

In response to open-ended question 11 (Table 11): With regard to the board select acquisition process, what are the most critical criteria considered in the selection decision making process: the majority of the respondents - 56% cited past performance in key jobs; followed by 44% that mentioned potential, and senior leader comments and who they came from. Question 11a (Table 11a) the majority of the respondents – 78% did not think that any of these criteria favored civilians over those with military experience. And for question 11b (Table 11b) 33% said that they thought that these criteria favored those with military experience over civilians (more leadership experience); and 33% said that they did not.

When asked open-ended question 13 (Table 13): Is there parity between civilians and those with military experience in the board select acquisition process: If not, what are the one or two changes that you would recommend to infuse parity? The majority - 77% said no there is not parity. The process owner for the board select acquisition process said that one method that they use to infuse parity is to require a SRPE from civilian applicants to evaluate the individual's potential – similar to the way they evaluate potential of military candidates.

Recommendations

The final recommendation was that the United States Army Acquisition Support Center, United States Army Director for Acquisition Career Management's Road Shows be reinstated as a way to effectively communicate career information to the workforce; and that leaders need to

become informed on career information and mentor employees on their career, to help lead them on the path to success.

Conclusion

This research examined if the Army has prepared its civilians, to compete with individuals with military experience, for Army board select acquisition positions; and to what extent there are biases in the board select acquisition process.

The findings from the study were that to a great extent the Army has provided civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions.

And while there may not be parity in the board select acquisition process, there is little evidence of bias.

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Appendix A – IRB Approval



Institutional Review Board
 Office of the Provost
research.ltu.edu irb@ltu.edu

February 10, 2017

Kathleen Lytle, MBA Candidate, DAU SSCF Global Leadership and Management
 Lawrence Technological University
 College of Management
klytle@ltu.edu

Dear Ms. Lytle,

I am pleased to report that the IRB application to conduct research with human participants for your MBA thesis “An Investigation of Civilians’ Preparedness to Compete with Individuals with Military Experience for Army Board Select Acquisition Positions” has been approved under the Expedited review path for a period of one year, February 10, 2017 – February 10, 2018.

The IRB is satisfied that the following three ethical concerns regarding the treatment of your human participants have been addressed in your research protocol: (1) The research involves interviewing participants who will voluntarily consent to participate in the study; (2) Participants who will voluntarily consent to complete the survey are free to withdraw from the study at any time; (3) You do not have any copyrighted devices in your survey and/or you are using original devices and/or devices in the public domain and/or devices you are permitted to use via fair use for educators; (4) You have identified potential risks to you and the participants; and (5) You have assured that a balance exists between potential benefits of the research to the participants and/or society and the risk assumed by the participants.

Please contact the IRB if you require an extension to your project after one year. Please note you must contact the IRB if you make a change to your research protocol that impacts the ethical treatment of your research participants. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRB if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Matthew Cole, Ph.D.

Chair, Institutional Review Board (IRB)
 Lawrence Technological University
irb@ltu.edu o: 248.204.3096 f: 248.204.3099

The Lawrence Tech IRB is organized and operated according to guidelines of the United States Office for Human Research Protections and the United States Code of Federal Regulations and operates under Federal Wide Assurance No. FWA00010997 that expires 02/23/2021.

Lawrence Technological University

College of Architecture and Design | College of Arts and Sciences | College of Engineering | College of Management
 21000 West Ten Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48075-1058 | 248.204.4000 p | 248.204.3727 f | ltu.edu

Appendix B – Informed Consent and Interview Instrument

Informed Consent to Participate in a Study

Army Board Select Acquisition Positions:

Are Civilians Prepared to Compete with the Military?

Ms. Kathy Lytle of the Lawrence Technological University, *College of Management*, invites you to be a part of a study – Army board select acquisition positions: Are civilians prepared to compete with the military? This research study looks at to what extent does the Army provide civilians the tools to compete for board select acquisition positions? And also to what extent are there biases in the board select acquisition process. The purpose of the study is to investigate if the Army has adequately prepared its civilians, to be on equal footing with the military, when competing for board select acquisition positions. We are asking you to participate because you are a key senior Army leader that has led or served on boards or you have successfully participated in the board select acquisition process.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to complete an in-person interview/phone interview/or if that is not possible, you will be provided with the interview questions for you to provide answers to, on the board select acquisition process and the tools the Army provides civilians to compete for board select positions. We expect the interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete. We would like to contact you soon to conduct an interview/provide the interview questions to you.

While you may not receive any direct benefit for participating, we hope that this study will contribute to the Army making improvements in its board selection process and the tools it

provides to civilians, to assure that they will be competitive with the military for board select acquisition positions. This could result in a more qualified candidate pools, and ultimately better leaders in our key acquisition positions.

Researchers will not be able to link your interview responses to you, but they will know that you participated in the research if you decide to consent to participate. We plan to publish the results of this study, but will not include any information that would identify you.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose to not answer any question that you do not want to answer in the interview.

Regarding compensation, please note that you will not be provided with any monetary compensation for participating in this study.

If you have questions about this research study, you can contact Ms. Kathy Lytle, at kathleen.a.lytle.civ@mail.mil.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Lawrence Technological University Institutional Review Board, 21000 West Ten Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48075, (248) 204-3541, irb@ltu.edu.

If you have read this informed consent form, understand the information contained in this informed consent form, and agree to participate in this study, please print and sign your name below, and enter today's date. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

Participant (please print your name)

Participant (please sign your name)

Date

Investigator's signature

Date

Interview Questions

- 1. What is your current position?**
- 2. How many years have you worked for the Army?**
- 3. Have you worked in the military (Army)? If so, for how many years?**
- 4. Have you worked as a civilian for the Army? If so, for how many years?**
- 5. Have you ever applied for a board select acquisition position? If so, how many times and at what level - the 05 and/or 06? Were you successful? If so, how many times, and at what level – 05 and/or 06?**
- 6. Have you ever served on an acquisition selection board? If so, how many times and at what level - 05 and/or 06?**
- 7. What aspects of the individual's board file makes a candidate competitive and distinguishes that file from others?**
- 8. Of these aspects the candidate needs to be competitive and high on the Order of Merit List (OML) (question #7), do you see different trends or challenges based on a file with military experience, versus a file with civilian experience? If so, please explain.**
- 9. Are there aspects of the individual's file or board select acquisition process that are more advantageous to civilian experience, compared to those with military experience? If so, please explain.**

- 10. Are there aspects of the individual's file or board select acquisition process that are more advantageous to those with military experience, compared to civilian experience? If so, please explain.**
- 11. With regard to the board select acquisition process, what are the most critical criteria considered in the selection decision making process?**
 - a. Do any of these criteria favor civilians over those with military experience?**
 - b. Do any of these criteria favor those with military experience over civilians?**
- 12. What are the strengths and weaknesses overall of a civilian versus those with military experience competing for a board select acquisition position? What recommendations would you make to better prepare a civilian or those with military experience to compete for a board select acquisition position?**
- 13. Is there parity between civilians and those with military experience in the board select acquisition process? If not, what are the one or two changes that you would recommend to infuse parity?**
- 14. How has the Army prepared its civilians to compete for board select acquisition positions?**
- 15. How has the Army prepared those with military experience to compete for board select acquisition positions?**
- 16. Is military experience beneficial to candidates applying for board select positions? If so, what are ways a civilian can get similar experience to be competitive?**

- 17. What is the Army's formal training program for civilians to become a 05/06 leader of an acquisition program – Product Director, Project Director, Product Manager, and Project Manager?**
- 18. What is the Army's formal training program for the military to become a 05/06 leader of an acquisition program – Product Manager, and Project Manager?**

Appendix C – OPSEC and Public Affairs Approval

DESCRIPTION OF INFORMATION FOR REVIEW		
Title/Description: Civilians' Preparedness to Compete with Individuals with Military Experience for Army Board Select Acquisition Positions		
(STEP 1) Author/Originator Kathleen Lytle		Organization PM E2S2
Phone #: (586) 770-3463		
Are you a contractor? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> If YES, Contract #: _____		
Forum where this information is to appear: Senior Service College Fellowship, and possibly an Acquisition Career Management Road Show		
Purpose of release: To inform civilians of the tools available to increase their competitiveness for board select acquisition positions.		
Product Format (check one): <input checked="" type="radio"/> Article <input type="radio"/> Briefing <input type="radio"/> Web Site <input type="radio"/> Equipment Display <input type="radio"/> Video Tape <input type="radio"/> Brochure <input type="radio"/> CD		
(STEP 2) TECH REVIEWER/TEAM LEADER: <input type="radio"/> Concur <input type="radio"/> Concur with Comment <input type="radio"/> NonConcur		
Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Signature	Grade:	Position:
_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
(STEP 3) Gov't Supervisor/Assoc Dir.: <input type="radio"/> Concur <input type="radio"/> Concur with Comment <input type="radio"/> NonConcur		
Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Signature	Grade:	Position:
_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
(STEP 4) Gov't Contracting Officer (if applicable): <input type="radio"/> Concur <input type="radio"/> Concur with Comment <input type="radio"/> NonConcur		
Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Signature	Phone:	
_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	
(STEP 5) Legal Office Review (if applicable): <input type="radio"/> Concur <input type="radio"/> Concur with Comment <input type="radio"/> NonConcur		
Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Signature	Phone:	
_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	
(STEP 6) OPSEC Officer: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Concur <input type="radio"/> Concur with Comment <input type="radio"/> NonConcur		
Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Signature	MCMULLEN.JOSEPH.ANTHONY Digitally signed by MCMULLEN.JOSEPH.ANTHONY 1033959091 Date: 2017-06-14 13:23:33 -04'00' _____ _____ _____ _____	
Phone:	703-704-0216	
(STEP 7) Public Affairs Reviewer: <input type="radio"/> Concur <input type="radio"/> Concur with Comment <input type="radio"/> NonConcur		
Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Signature	BINGHAM.RAYMOND.LESTER.1 Digitally signed by BINGHAM.RAYMOND.LESTER.10389738 Date: 2017-06-14 13:23:34 -04'00' _____ _____ _____ _____	
Phone:	703-704-1939	
Additional comments can be entered on page 3 of this form		

PEO CS&CSS OPSEC REVIEW PROCESS

1. An OPSEC Review is intended to evaluate government information (document, video tape, voice tape, briefings, articles, or equipment) to determine if it can be designated for unclassified and unlimited (public domain). The purpose of an OPSEC Review is to ensure the continued protection of government information, which for operation, legal or security reasons is considered sensitive or critical information that should not be released to the public.
2. Before a government employee or contractor can release US Government information to the public, it must have an OPSEC Review.
3. PEO CS&CSS personnel (to include contractors/contracting partners) will use the STA Form 7114-2 PEO CS&CSS to guide and document the OPSEC Review process. The STA Form 7114-2 PEO is designed to be used electronically: If electronic means are not available, contact the PEO OPSEC Officer as there is a form that can be used with hard signatures.
4. OPSEC Review Steps:
 - STEP 1** - Author prepares information for the public release in response to government tasking (conference, symposium, periodical, briefing, etc.)
 - STEP 2** - A technical expert reviews the prepared product (must be someone other than the author).
 - STEP 3** - Government supervisor reviews and approves product (must be someone other than the author).
 - STEP 4** - Government contracting officer reviews if contractor or proprietary information is involved.
 - STEP 5** - Legal office reviews if contractor information, proprietary information, or copyrighted materials (e.g. text, illustrations, photos, movie clips or sound tracks) are involved. Attach owner's written consent to use copyright material, if available.
 - STEP 6** - OPSEC Officer reviews for operational security, security classification, and foreign disclosure.
 - STEP 7** - Public Affairs Office reviews for context and if product is consistent with PEO mission.
 - STEP 8** - Product is returned to originator for release. Author will add the following statement to the front page of the document, and on the video, CD, etc. "Distribution Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited."
 - STEP 9** - If OPSEC Review is returned with comments or is disapproved, a face-to-face meeting will be held to resolve comment concerns, if necessary.
 - STEP 10** - A copy of the STA Form 7114-2 and a hard copy of the product will be retained by the originator and PEO CS&CSS PAO as the official record copy.

Examples of potentially inappropriate information for public release

a. Equipment capabilities, limitations, and vulnerabilities.	b. Detailed mission statement.
c. Operation schedules.	d. Readiness and vulnerability assessments.
e. Test locations and dates.	f. Inventory charts and reports.
g. Detailed budget data.	h. Internal installation maps and photographs.
i. Standard Operating Procedures and tactics.	j. Detailed personal biographies.
k. Detailed organization charts (with phone and email listings).	l. Sensitive unclassified reports for internal Army use.
m. Technical and scientific proprietary data developed by a contractor.	n. Unclassified technical data with military applications.
o. Critical Maintenance information.	p. Information extracted from and internet website.
q. Personal information pertaining to individuals (PII).	r. Lessons learned that could reveal sensitive military operations, exercises, or vulnerabilities.
s. Movement of assets where uncertainty of location is a program or operational element	t. Logistics support (munitions, weapons movement).
u. Specific, real-time support to current/ongoing military operations.	

PEO CS&CSS OPSEC REVIEW PROCESS ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	
Office:	<input type="text"/>
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Author Biography

Ms. Kathleen Lytle is currently a Senior Service College Fellow in Warren, MI, and most recently served from 2013-2016, as the Product Director for Contingency Base Infrastructure (CBI), in the Program Executive Office Combat Support & Combat Service Support (PEO CS&CSS). She led her team to provide systems engineering and analytical support, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of contingency bases; which led to integrated, scalable, and affordable contingency basing capabilities, reduced sustainment demand and increased mission effectiveness for the Warfighter. Ms. Lytle oversaw the execution of a \$20M budget over the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) and developed a virtual workforce of 20 employees from nine states across the nation.



Also in PEO CS&CSS, before serving as Product Director, she was the Lead for the Contingency Basing Developmental Planning Team from 2011 to 2013. Ms. Lytle successfully brought the vision of the institutionalization of Contingency Basing to reality, by obtaining a 7 February 2013 decision from the Army Acquisition Executive, to stand-up the Product Directorate Contingency Base Infrastructure. In addition, she served on a Joint Program with the Army and Navy, as the Assistant Product Manager, Interim Theater Support Vessel Program and Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration Program.

Ms. Lytle's other Army acquisition assignments at PEO CS&CSS included: Deputy Product Director, Army Watercraft Systems; Assistant Product Director, Floating Craft Team; Assistant Product Manager, Construction Equipment/Material Handling Equipment Modernization Plan; and Systems Acquisitions Manager, Logistics Support Vessel Re-procurement Program and Containerized Maintenance Facility Program.

Her Marine Corps acquisition assignments at the Program Management Office Light Armored Vehicles (PM LAV) included: Team Leader, Light Armored Vehicle Service Life Extension Program; Team Leader, Light Armored Vehicle Mobility Block Improvement Program; and Team Leader, Light Armored Vehicle Physical Teardown Logistics Demonstration.

Ms. Lytle is currently earning her Masters in Global Leadership and Management at Lawrence Technological University; Earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Minor in Business Management from Oakland University in Rochester Hills, Michigan (1982); Graduated from Eckerd College's Leadership Development Institute (2006); Became a member of the Army Acquisition Corps (2005); Graduated from the Advanced Program Management Course, at the Defense Systems Management College (1998); And is Defense Acquisition Workforce Level III certified in Program Management and Life Cycle Logistics.

Her awards and honors include: Superior Civilian Service Award (2016); Army, Modeling and Simulation Team Award (2015); Commander's Award for Civilian Service (2014); Honorable Order of Saint Christopher (2009); Department of Defense, Logistics Life Cycle Cost Reduction Award (1996); and Marine Corps Systems Command, Special Team Achievement Award (1996).

Ms. Lytle is married to Colonel Thomas M. Lytle, USMC (Retired).

